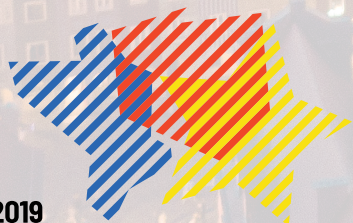


Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future



Poznań 2019

Western Balkans Summit

**Publication accompanying
the Western Balkans Summit
in Poznań**

Magdalena Stokłosa, Aleksandra Wójcik

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PUBLICATION ACCOMPANYING THE WESTERN BALKANS SUMMIT IN POZNAŃ

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Foreword

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We are glad to share our experience of the period of political and economic transition that preceded our country's accession to the European Union with our partners in the Western Balkans.

We actively support the European aspirations of Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia and Albania, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

Mateusz Morawiecki

Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland

Mateusz Morawiecki

Source: Chancellery
of the Prime Minister
of the Republic of Poland



Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 2018, Poland, celebrating the centenary of the restoration of its independence, happily joined the countries participating in the Berlin Process. Together with other states comprising the Visegrad Group, we want to express our solidarity with countries wishing to become part of the European Union and we support the enlargement policy.

Poland is the most populous and the largest country in terms of area among those who joined the EU since 2004. Membership in the European Community has brought our country a number of economic, political and social benefits. Indeed, our country now has the sixth-largest economy in terms of GDP in the EU, while maintaining one of the highest growth rates in the Community.

In spite of this, we haven't forgotten about the road that led us to where we are today. In the 1990s, Poland, standing up after nearly half a century of communist rule, was struggling with numerous challenges, the most serious of which were corruption and crime. Today, we can boast significant successes in curbing and counteracting these phenomena, as evidenced by high positions in the rankings for anti-corruption activity, law enforcement and the criminal process.

We are glad to share our experience of the period of political and economic transition that preceded our country's accession to the European Union with our partners in the Western Balkans. We firmly believe that our path can inspire today's candidates and potential candidates for EU membership.

As we celebrate the 15th anniversary of our accession, we declare our support for the full European integration of the countries of the Western Balkans. The programme of the Polish Presidency in the Berlin Process is based on four pillars: economy, connectivity, civic dimension (encompassing civil society, youth, think tanks, science and culture), as well as national and Union security.

We strongly believe that activities concerning gas, energy, road and rail infrastructure should play an important role in the Berlin Process. Together with Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, Poland is developing the Three Seas Initiative, which is a necessary complement to the European Union infrastructure. The North-South dimension is crucial for the future of the European Union, its economic development and security. We hope that the Western Balkans will also be part of this important project after accession to the EU.

We actively support the European aspirations of Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia and Albania, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Countries interested in Euro-Atlantic cooperation can also count on our support. We believe that making these plans a reality will contribute to the prosperity of the nations, to raising the quality of life and to the stability of the Western Balkans region. We strongly believe that the Poznań Summit is an important step along this road.

Mateusz Morawiecki

Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland



Preface

”

This publication is a proof that the cooperation of Poles with the Balkan nations has a long, rich and diverse history.

From diplomacy and trade through culture, tourism and sport – all areas and aspects of life were ripe for cooperation, as evidenced by the many archival documents, photographs and publications presented on the following pages of the album.

Szymon Szynkowski vel Sęk

Polish Government Plenipotentiary for the Organisation of the Western Balkans Summit

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

Szymon
Szynkowski vel Sęk

Source: Tymon
Markowski
/ Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of the Republic
of Poland



Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to present you with the publication issued on the occasion of the Western Balkans Summit in Poznań.

The Berlin Process, which supports the European Union enlargement policy, is a platform for dialogue and cooperation in which political and economic issues play a dominant role. I am glad that this year we can put a special emphasis on the civic component. This is expressed, among other ways, by strengthening ties between the societies of the European Union and the peoples of the Western Balkans.

I believe that the full European integration pursued by candidate countries and potential candidates for the EU accession is only possible if we involve every citizen in the process. That is why, in preparation for the Summit, many initiatives have taken place in Poznań aimed at familiarising the residents of the city with the cultural richness of the Western Balkans.

This publication is a proof that the cooperation of Poles with the Balkan nations has a long, rich and diverse history. A significant contribution to this is the similarity of fate, marked by years of struggle for independence. Between the World War I and World War II, there was a great rapprochement between Poles and the nations of the Western Balkans. From diplomacy and trade through culture, tourism and sport – all areas and aspects of life were ripe for cooperation, as evidenced by the many archival documents, photographs and publications presented on the following pages of the album.

As a resident of Poznań, I am glad that this city will host the Western Balkans Summit. My homecity, Poznań, is one of the oldest urban centres in Poland, the seat of the first Polish rulers and the first bishopric.

It is the city which rose up in arms against German invaders in the Greater Poland Uprising and managed to bring itself back onto the map of independent Poland a century ago. Poznań is the city that nurtured the Polish mathematicians who later broke the code of the Enigma cipher machine, which was vital for the Allies' victory in the Second World War. In June 1956, the Poznań Uprising was the first massive workers protest of this kind in the Soviet Bloc countries.

It was here, on the premises of the Poznań International Fair, that the 1929 Polish National Exhibition took place, presenting the achievements of the young, reborn Polish state. The Poznań of that time became an economic centre and a symbol of entrepreneurship in Poland. The exhibition was attended by many foreign delegations, thus serving as an opportunity to guests, also from the Western Balkans, to exchange ideas and experiences. Indeed, in the 1930s, Poznań was the seat of the Polish-Yugoslavian Society, the host of the Congress of Polish-Yugoslavian Friendship, as well as the start-point of numerous cultural and sports events that served as the building blocks of the friendly relations between Poles and the Balkan nations.

Today, Poznań is becoming a place of lively debate once again, with our youth taking an active part shaping this. We believe that the achievements of previous generations can serve as an inspiration and a solid foundation for building the future of Europe together.

Szymon Szykowski vel Sęk

Polish Government Plenipotentiary for the Organisation
of the Western Balkans Summit

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs



THE CITY

Just over a hundred years ago, in 1918, Poland regained its independence. The rebirth of the state turned a new page in the history of Poznań – one of the oldest Polish cities.

The last century was marked by a history of struggle for national freedom, followed by development and prosperity, the tragedy of the loss of independence, and the heroic fight for dignity and justice. Join us in our journey through time in Poznań.

Poznań – the Old Town.

Source: 123RF

Under the Partitions: Postcards from *Posen*



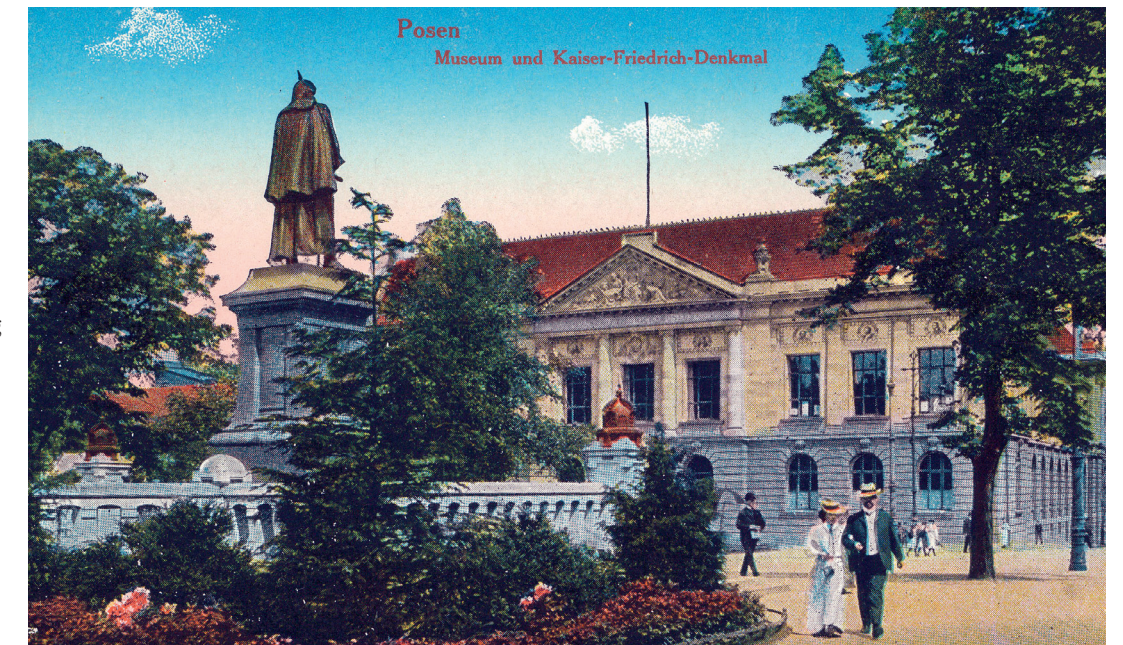
Between 1772 and 1795, all of Poland was divided among three Partitioning Powers: Austria, the Kingdom of Prussia and Russia. Poznań (German: *Posen*), along with the whole Greater Poland region became part of the Prussian partition. In 1902, a monument to the German Emperor Frederick III was erected in the city, followed by a sculpture of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in 1903. At the request of German Emperor Wilhelm II, the Imperial Castle – *Königliches Residenzschloß* – was built there.

The residents of Poznań and inhabitants of the entire Greater Poland region never came to terms with the loss of freedom and the ban on cultivating Polish traditions and Polish-language education. Many local patriots took up the fight against Germanisation, and their main mission was to raise a conscious, educated and well-to-do society.



Postcards from before 1918 showing monuments and buildings erected by the invader.

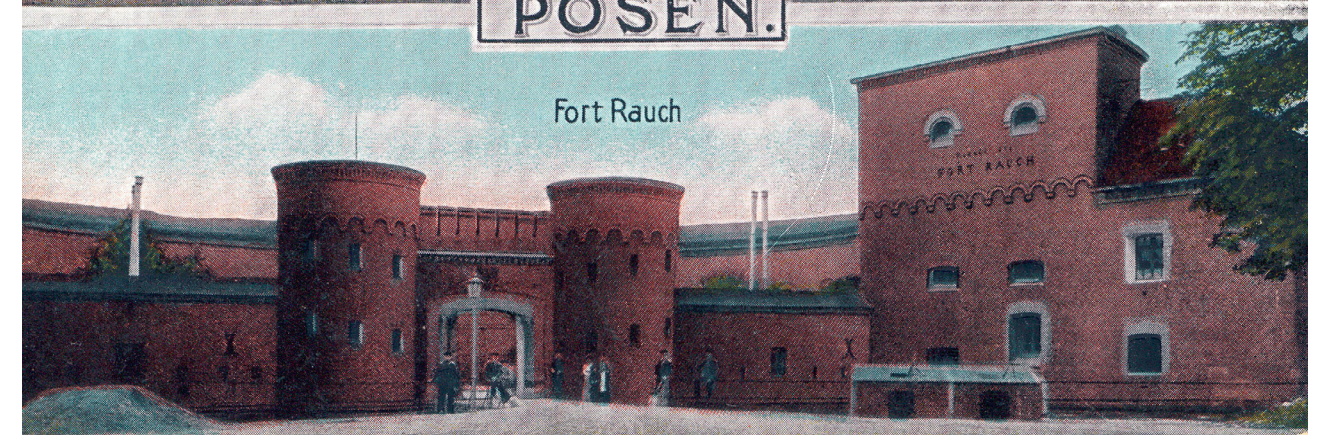
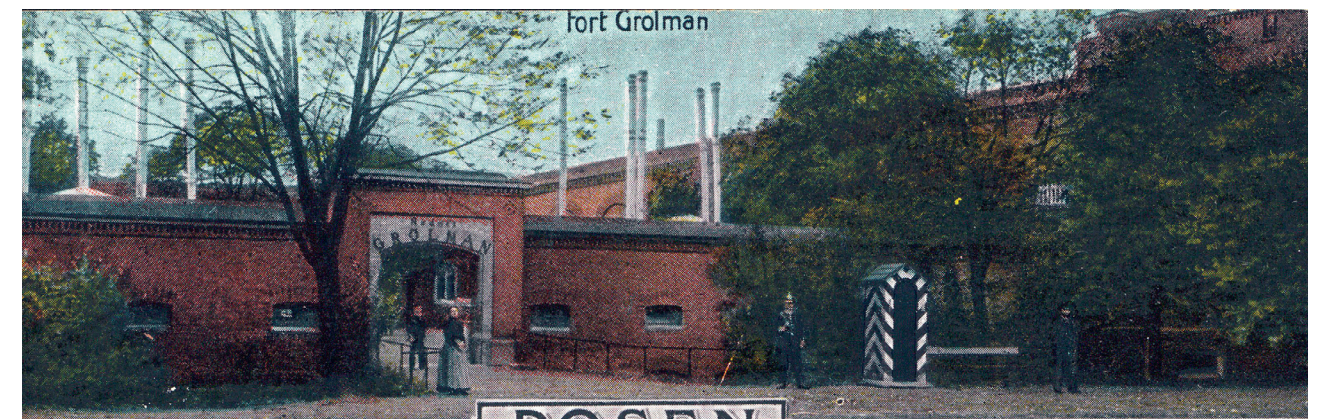
Source: National Library of Poland



Festung Posen



Postcards from before 1918 showing military buildings. Source: National Library of Poland



In the 19th-century, Posen did not resemble today's city in the slightest. Poznań Fortress (German: *Festung Posen*) housed a garrison, a fortress centre dominated by the Prussian army and officials. German settlers were also brought into the city.

In 1914, World War I broke out. Prolonged fighting made the life of Poles nigh unbearable. At the same time, however, it also exhausted the three Partitioning Powers, which were all involved in the armed conflict. The Polish dream of independence came back to life.

1918: Independence



As a result of World War I, the powers that occupied the Polish lands collapsed. On 11 November 1918, Józef Piłsudski took hold of the reins of the Polish army – an act considered to be the beginning of Poland's independence. Over the following months, the Republic of Poland reclaimed successive territories from the invaders and shaped its new borders.

In December 1918, Ignacy Jan Paderewski came to Poznań, which was still in German hands at that time. An outstanding pianist and world-famous composer, he was also an independence activist, who personally convinced the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, that Poland must be independent. He was welcomed in Poznań by crowds of city residents. Paderewski's arrival provided the impulse to start fighting for the return of the Prussian partition to independent Poland.

Arrival of Ignacy Jan Paderewski
in Poznań, 27 December 1918.

Source: National Digital Archives

Greater Poland Uprising



Painting
by Leon Prauziński
*Fighting
in the Suburbs
of Poznań
– a Fragment
of the Fighting Near
Chwaliszewski Bridge.*

Source: National
Library of Poland

During Paderewski's stay in Poznań, the Germans provoked the Poles by marching their army through the city and removing Polish flags from balconies. On 27 December 1918, the residents of Poznań took up arms. Soon after, Poles captured the building of the German Police Presidium, followed by the Main Railway Station, the Main Post Office and some of the fortifications.

Over the next few days, the city was taken over by the insurgents, who gradually ousted the Prussian administration. The news of the uprising in Poznań motivated the inhabitants of the entire Greater Poland region (a province in West-Central Poland) to take up arms.

1919: Victory



The Greater Poland Uprising ended in a Polish victory on 16 February 1919. The memory of the victorious battle begun by the residents of Poznań is kept alive. The Old Market Square in Poznań houses the 1918–1919 Greater Poland Uprising Museum, whose collections feature, documents, uniforms, militaria, photographs and paintings.

Works painted by one of the insurgents, Leon Prauziński, help us imagine the course of the uprising. These include *Disarming the Remaining German Army at Poznań Fortress*, shown here on the left.

Twenty years later, this is where Leon Prauziński would be murdered by the Germans. Before that happened, however, he would be able to start a family, graduate from the Faculty of Painting and Fine Arts, and illustrate numerous books and magazines. His paintings from the Battle of Poznań would be reproduced on thousands of postcards.

Leon Prauziński,
*Disarming the Remaining
German Army at Poznań
Fortress.*

Source: National Library
of Poland

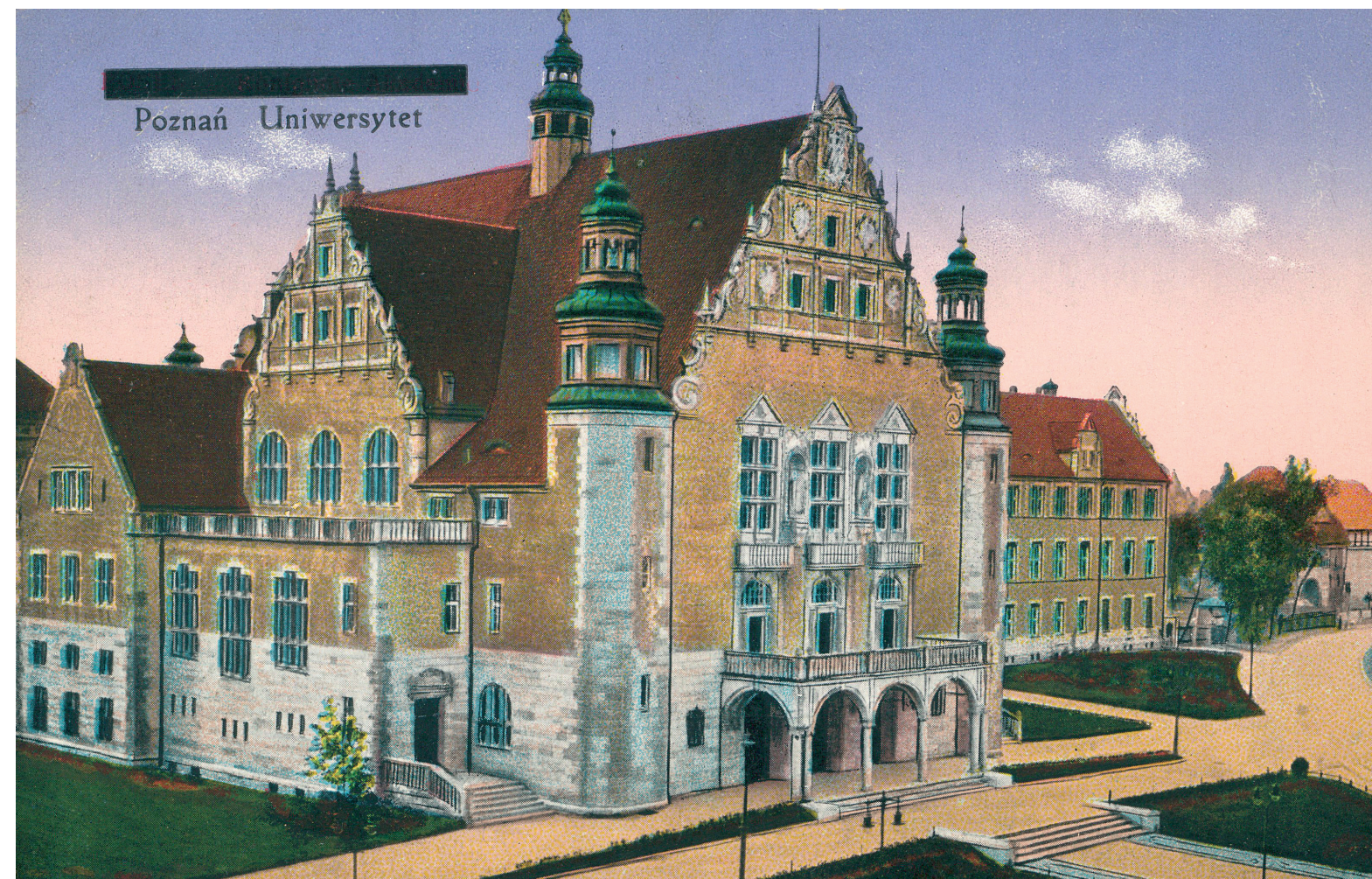
Postcards from free Poznań



Wolności Square and the Raczyński Library on a coloured postcard from the 1930s.

Source: National Library of Poland

2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the day the Wolności Square (Freedom Square, formerly known as Wilhelmsplatz) was given its name. This is where the soldiers of the Greater Poland Army and their commander, General Józef Dowbor-Muśnicki, took a solemn oath to serve Poland. After the victorious uprising, Poles began to remove Prussian symbols from the city, going as far as blackening out German names on coloured postcards.



Postcard featuring the University of Poznań, with a blackened-out German name from before 1919. The university celebrates its centenary in 2019.

Source: National Library of Poland

Free Poznań started growing at a very dynamic pace. Shortly, the city became a strong centre of Polish culture and science. In 1919, a university was established in the city and the Poznań Opera was opened, along with a number of theatres, museums and libraries. Numerous engineers, economists and scientists also arrived in the city, contributing to the development of industrial plants, as well as the growth of crafts, the cooperative movement, banking and trade.

■ Poznań International Fair



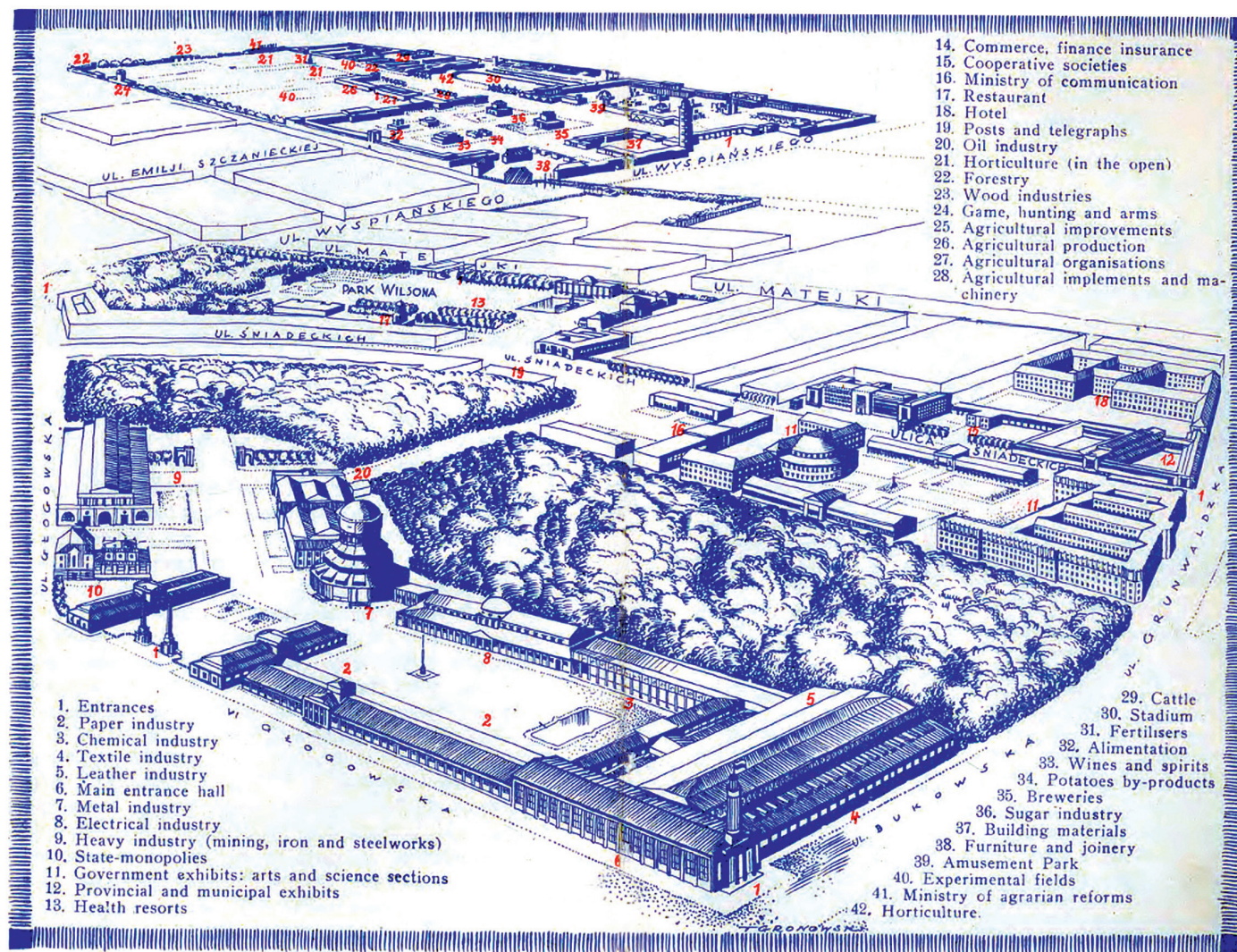
1921 marked the first time Poznań hosted a nationwide trade fair. Due to the lack of suitable exhibition halls, the event was scattered across various parts of the city. A few years later, pavilions were purpose-built and since 1924 the fair has gained international importance, attracting hundreds of companies from several countries. The fair served as a great annual showcase of Polish products, as well as goods imported from abroad, making a crucial contribution to the development of the city and thus becoming its living symbol, standing to this day.

Since 1924, products from the Balkans were also showcased during the event. This included minerals and ores, fur, tobacco, opium, leather, wool, Sarajevo and Pirot kilims, as well as silver- and gold-plated accessories. There was no shortage of Balkan food – medicinal grasses, olive oil, wine vinegar, wine, slivovitz and rakia. Visitors could taste fruit straight from the Balkans – apples, dried cherries and plums, as well as preserves – juices and jam, chestnuts, dried fish, fish pastes, smoked meats, cheeses, halva and many other products.

Opening of the Poznań International Fair in 1931, with the participation of a delegation from Yugoslavia. In the centre – Minister of Industry and Trade Aleksander Prystor (cutting the ribbon). On his right – Yugoslav charge d'affaires, Ivo de Giulli. On his left – Mayor of Poznań, Cyryl Ratajski.

Source: National Digital Archives

1929: Polish National Exhibition in Poznań



Map of the Polish National Exhibition in Poznań. Source: Greater Poland Digital Library



In the 1920s, many Polish cities were still recovering from the wartime damage; however, Poznań fortunately did not have to struggle with this problem. This was one of the reasons why the authorities chose the city to host the Polish National Exhibition on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of winning back independence.

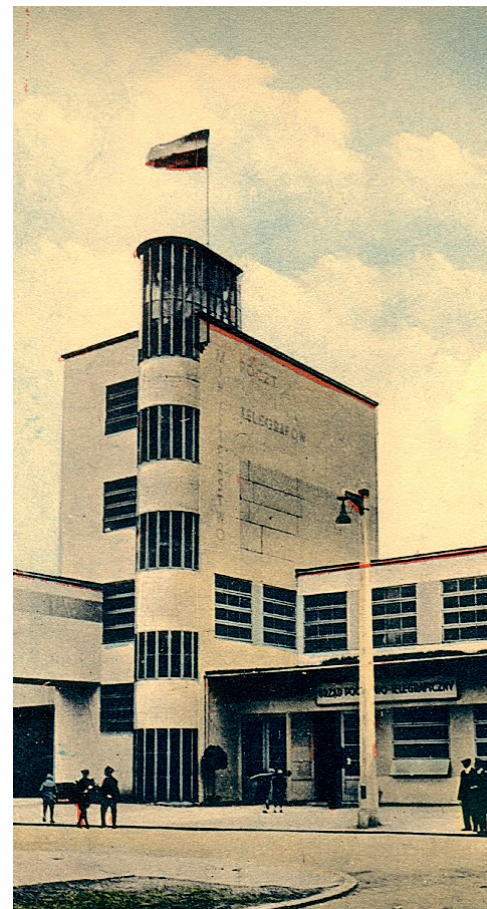
The exhibition was announced to be a great review of national art and a showcase of the economic achievements of the country to date. In order to make this possible, new halls, pavilions, houses, restaurants and hotels had to be erected. Along with these, new school and university buildings were built, the railway station was expanded, some squares and streets were overhauled. Poznań's theatre and cinema halls were renovated. The total cost of all investments was 70-100 million zlotys. In total, about 120 exhibition facilities were built on an area of 65 hectares.

An advertising leaflet from the time read, "An area of well over five and a half million square feet is being allocated to the various exhibits illustrating all sides of Polish national life. Here we will find grouped in a logical order a true portrayal of Poland's progress in science, arts, industry, commerce, crafts and agriculture".

Cover of an advertising leaflet from 1929.

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library

Praise from the Balkans



Branko Lazarević,
the Plenipotentiary
Minister and Deputy
of the Kingdom
of Serbs, Croats
and Slovenes.

Source: National Digital
Archives



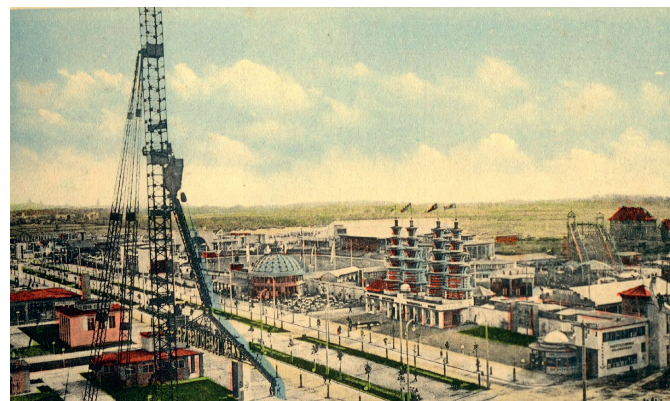
On 16 May 1929, the Polish National Exhibition was officially opened by the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki. The exhibition was visited by about 4.5 million people, 200,000 of whom were international visitors. Poznań hosted 23 official government delegations, 180 tours and 600 journalists from 30 countries. It is estimated that the Polish National Exhibition sparked the publication of about 60,000 press articles about Poland.

On 12 September, Milan Lazarević, a representative of the Yugoslavian Ministry of Industry and Trade, came to Poznań. Branko Lazarević, the Plenipotentiary Minister and Deputy of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, praised the exhibition: "I was impressed by the constructive abilities of the Poles who, over the course of the last ten years, were able to make such an effort. It is admirable that this effort is a work of just one generation. As far as the overall impression from the Exhibition is concerned, it is its American-like scale that is the most noteworthy [...] The exhibition reflects the economic power of Poland, which draws its juices from the depths of Polish souls."



Photographs by Roman
Stefan Ulatowski,
*Album of the Polish
National Exhibition,*
Poznań 1929.

Source: Greater Poland
Digital Library



German occupation



Arthur Greiser takes the office of the Governor of Warthegau. Imperial Castle in Poznań, November 1939.

Source: National Digital Archives



Briefing of the administrative staff at the Poznań Castle in the presence of the gauleiter Arthur Greiser, January 1940.

Source: National Digital Archives

On 1 September 1939, Germany launched an offensive against Poland. In Poznań, located only 75 kilometres from the border with the Third Reich, 190 civilians and several dozen soldiers died as a result of bombardments on the first day of the war. German troops entered the city on 10 September. Some 18 days later, Warsaw surrendered.

Poznań was incorporated into the Third Reich and became part of an administrative region that Germans referred to as 'Warta Country' (*Reichsgau Wartheland*). Arthur Greiser was appointed Adolf Hitler's gauleiter (governor) for Warta Country. He quickly gained notoriety for his enormous brutality and ruthlessness.



First German National Socialist Celebration in Poznań, November 1939.

Source: National Digital Archives



Left: Germans parade in front of the Imperial Castle in Poznań, November 1939.

Source: National Digital Archives



Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda of the Third Reich, signs the golden book of the city in Poznań Town Hall, January 1940.

Source: National Digital Archives

Terror and death



Andrzej Bartkowiak's watercolour paintings depicting the suffering endured by the prisoners of German camps in Greater Poland.

Source: Martyrological Museum in Żabikowo



On 10 October 1939, the first German concentration camp in occupied Poland was established on the premises of the old Prussian fortress called Fort VII. There, for the first time in Europe, gas was used to murder civilians. The camp served as a prison for the most eminent residents of Poznań and the region – independence and political activists, clergymen, teachers, university professors, state officials, entrepreneurs and landowners. Many found themselves imprisoned in the camp for alleged hostility towards Germany. Such was the case with the participants of the Greater Poland Uprising of 1918-1919, who fought against Germans. Leon Prauziński who painted scenes from the Uprising (see pages 22-25), was murdered in KL Posen.

Lager der Blutrache – the Camp of Bloody Revenge – this is how the Germans described the hell they built for their prisoners. Sophisticated torture, sadistic abuse, mental violence – all were parts of the everyday life of the prisoners of KL Posen. This was compounded with hunger, cold, stuffy, overcrowded cells, and tragic sanitary conditions that caused disease. Mass executions of prisoners were carried out in the surrounding forests. The number of victims of German crimes in KL Posen is estimated at up to 20,000.

In parallel to KL Posen, a German penal and detention camp was established a dozen or so kilometres away in Żabikowo. It was much bigger, so in 1944 the prisoners and staff of KL Posen were moved to Żabikowo. The camp now houses the Martyrological Museum in Żabikowo.



Fort VII in Poznań – the first German concentration camp in Poland occupied by the Third Reich.

Source: Wikipedia



Rosary made of bread by Edmund Piechowiak, a prisoner of the Fort VII camp.

Source: Martyrological Museum in Żabikowo

Enigma: Success of mathematicians from Poznań



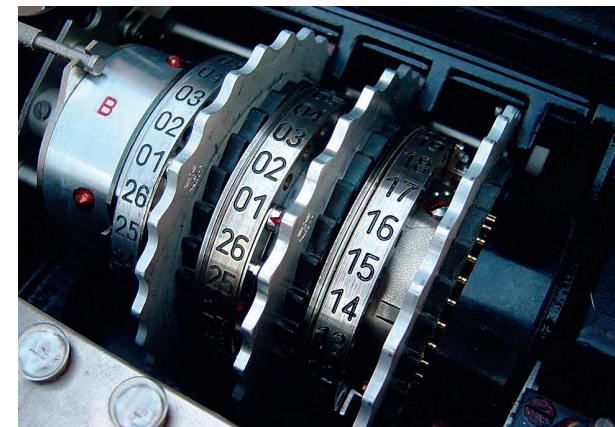
Enigma Codebreakers multimedia exhibition and fragments of the monument to cryptologists in front of the main entrance to the Imperial Castle in Poznań. The letters of the mathematicians' surnames were incorporated into the series of digits.

Source: Łukasiewicz Institute Foundation



Enigma at an exhibition at the Museum of Technology in Warsaw.

Source: Wikipedia



Setting of the Enigma rotors.

Source: Wikipedia

Breaking the code of the German Enigma cipher machine is considered to be one of the breakthrough events of World War II. It couldn't have been done without three Polish mathematicians from the University of Poznań: Marian Rejewski, Jerzy Różycki and Henryk Zygalski.

The Germans had been using the Enigma machine since the 1920s to send military messages. Materials obtained by the Polish intelligence service thus often turned out to be worthless, because the ciphers themselves could not reveal any actual intelligence. The authorities of the Polish Cipher Bureau asked Prof. Zdzisław Krygowski, the founder of the Faculty of Mathematics at the University of Poznań, to organise a course in cryptology. The scientist selected three of his most talented students: Marian Rejewski, Henryk Zygalski and Jerzy Różycki, who were then given the task of solving the cipher of the Enigma. Several years of intensive work and ongoing learning including the German language, led to tremendous success – at the end of December 1932, the code of the Enigma, a machine considered to be unbreakable, was deciphered for the first time.

A year later, a Polish copy of the military Enigma was made. From then on, Poles were able to read intercepted German correspondence, which was passed on for almost seven years to the French and the English, without sharing the source of the obtained intelligence. However, the growing tensions between Poland and Hitler's Germany led Poles to reveal the secrets of the work of the Polish Cipher Bureau to their allies. In spring of 1939, they were given a copy of the Polish version of the machine, a description of working methods and instructions. This enabled the British to decipher German correspondence on their own. The work of Polish and British cryptologists meant that by the end of the war, nearly all German correspondence was intercepted and read by the Allies. According to historians, the Allies' knowledge of the content of messages sent using the Enigma shortened the war by two to three years. Considering the fact that nearly 10 million people lost their lives during a war year, the success of mathematicians from Poznań takes on a spectacular and poignant dimension.

In 2000, the three great mathematicians from Poznań were posthumously awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta medals. In the capital of Greater Poland, residents and visitors are reminded of their achievements by a monument and an exhibition. Work is also underway to establish the Enigma Museum, which is to be completed by the end of 2019 on the first floor of the former Collegium Historicum on Św. Marcin [St. Martin] Street.

1945: Battle of Poznań



Ruins of Old Market Square, destroyed town hall and townhouses after the end of the war. February to April 1945.

Author:
Zbigniew Zielonacki
Owner:
Lech Zielonacki
Source:
cyryl.poznan.pl

Internal buildings of the Old Market Square with the statue of St John of Nepomuk at the exit of Wrocławska Street after the end of the war. February to April 1945.

Author:
Zbigniew Zielonacki
Owner:
Lech Zielonacki
Source:
cyryl.poznan.pl



Wartime destruction in Chwaliszewo (a district of Poznań), 1945.

Author: Zbigniew Zielonacki
Owner: Lech Zielonacki, Source: cyryl.poznan.pl

1 August 1944 marked the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising against the Germans, organised by the Home Army. The aim of the Home Army, the armed forces of the Polish Underground State, was to liberate the city before the arrival of the Soviet forces. Unfortunately, after 63 days of heroic fighting, the Warsaw Uprising failed. The Red Army then continued its offensive to the west.

Meanwhile, the Germans, preparing for the Soviet attack on Poznań, turned the city into a fortress. On 12 January 1945, a Soviet offensive started and there was a raging battle for the city. The Red Army reached the city centre and stormed the last point of German resistance – the Citadel. The Germans surrendered on 23 February 1945. It is estimated that about 10,000 Soviet soldiers and about 6,000 German soldiers died in the battle.

The effects of the battle of Poznań were tragic for the city and its residents. Nearly 700 civilians died, and nearly 55% of all buildings in the city were reduced to rubble. The Old Town was almost completely destroyed, along with the majority of monuments and all bridges (except for Dworcowy Bridge). Priceless library collections, archives and works of art were irreversibly lost. Despite the fact that Germans were defeated, Poznań did not regain its freedom, as the new Soviet occupation began in Poland.



Ruins of townhouses and rubble in Wolności Square at the end of World War II, 1945.

Author: Zbigniew Zielonacki, Owner: Lech Zielonacki, Source: cyryl.poznan.pl



View of ruined roofs of the Old Town from the west, with ruins of the Prussian New Town Hall and the Renaissance Town Hall with a destroyed tower in the background, 1945.

Author:
Zbigniew Zielonacki
Owner:
Lech Zielonacki
Source:
cyryl.poznan.pl

1956: Poznań Uprising



Manifestation
of the workers
of the Cegielski
Factory,
28 June 1956.

Source:
Laski Diffusion/
East News

In the 1950s, living and working conditions in Poland were very difficult. The centrally planned communist economy turned out to be a failure. Poznań experienced food shortages, the workers were poorly paid, and the targets in industrial plants were constantly being raised. Poznań workers decided to fight for their dignity and a better life. When the talks with the authorities failed, they took to the streets. On 28 June 1956, metalworkers went on strike and marched through the town. The protesters were soon joined by thousands of workers from other factories and plants. They carried banners and shouted slogans concerning better living conditions such as “We demand raises”, “We want to live like people”, “We want bread”, as well as anti-Soviet and religious rallying cries of “We want a free Poland”, “We demand free elections overseen by the UN”, “Communists get out!”, “We want God”. The authorities brutally suppressed the protests, sending more than 10,000 soldiers and 360 tanks to quell the riots. The residents of Poznań heard a warning on the radio from the communist Prime Minister of Poland, Józef Cyrankiewicz: “Any provocateur or madman who dares to lift his hand against the power of People’s Poland will have that hand chopped off.”



Workers
protesting
in Poznań,
June 1956.

Source:
PAP/ITAR-TASS

Several dozen people died as a result of fighting in the city (57 or 58 according to the latest estimates). The youngest victim, Romek Strzałkowski, was only 13 years old at the time of his death. Approximately 650 people were injured. Several hundred were arrested and subjected to brutal investigations or repression. The liberalisation of the communist regime in Poland after the uprising was an important signal for other countries of Central and Eastern Europe to fight against communism. In October 1956, the Hungarian populace protested against the Stalinist regime, but the uprising was suppressed by the Red Army.

Although the communist authorities preferred to refer to the 1956 events in Poznań as an “incident”, historians tend to call them an uprising*. The use of this term was postulated, among others, by the eminent historian, Prof. Lech Trzeciakowski. “The term ‘uprising’ refers to a heroic act – and as such, it remains in the historical consciousness of Poles. The Poznań Uprising was definitely such an act”, he argued in one of his interviews. As he explained, even the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev knew the importance of the Poznań events, referring to them as “an uprising”.

In the following years, the residents of Poznań fought hard to preserve the memory of June 1956 – the first mass protest against the communist authorities. Because of the opposition of communist regime, a monument to the victims was not erected in the city until 1981.

*The term *workers' uprising* in the context of the June 1956 events in Poznań was also used by Zbigniew Brzezinski, a world-famous Polish-American political scientist, expert on the Soviet Union and advisor to three Presidents of the United States, in his work *The Soviet Bloc Unity and Conflict* just four years later.



June 1956 Monument in Poznań was erected in the very heart of the city. It depicts two crosses joined by one arm and an eagle guarding them. The monument bears the inscription: “For God, for Freedom, Law and Bread”.

Source: Wikipedia

1983: Pope in Poznań



On the right: Welcoming the Pope on his arrival in Poznań. On the left: Holy Father officiating at a mass held at Łęgi Dębińskie. Below: Crowd of worshippers attending the service, June 1983.

Source: National Digital Archives, Polish Press Agency / CAF-ADM Jerzy Undro, CAF-ADM Zbigniew Staszyszyn



On 16 October 1978, a sensational message circulated around the world, and a new hope was born in the hearts of Poles under the yoke of communism. Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyła was elected the head of the Catholic Church. The result of the conclave would soon have a major impact on the transition of the whole of Central and Eastern Europe towards democracy.

Just a few months after the appointment, Pope John Paul II visited his homeland. The memorable quote, “Let your Spirit descend and renew the face of the earth, the face of this land” became an important message for Poles and inspiration to resist the authorities. In 1980, the Solidarity trade union was founded, aiming to fight for workers’ rights and oppose communism. The movement was fiercely countered by the authorities. On 13 December 1981, General Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law, marking the start of another black page in the history of Poland. The next visit of John Paul II to Poland in these circumstances was of great importance for Poles. Poznań was one of the cities visited by the Pope, along the route of his pilgrimage, the message of which was “Peace to You, Poland, My Homeland”.

The meeting with Pope John Paul II at Łęgi Dębińskie on 20 June 1983 was attended by one million worshippers. “Poznań! Modern Poznań – a city of great tradition. A city that defines a special style of building common good in the life of the nation. A city of great industrial plants. A city of contemporary university culture. A city in which Catholic social thought and the national structure of Catholic organisations developed”, said the Polish Pope in his homily. The communist authorities barred him from praying at the June 1956 Monument.



Meeting of Pope John Paul II with the authorities of the Polish People's Republic. On the left, in uniform – First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, Prime Minister, General Wojciech Jaruzelski. The symbolism of the photograph is very clear and poignant: a large space separates one of the most hated people in Poland at that time, the author of martial law, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, and John Paul II, a representative of a nation vying for freedom.

Source: National Digital Archives

Past and present: Contemporary Poznań

Archcathedral
Basilica of St Peter
and St Paul in Ostrów
Tumski in Poznań.

Source: 123RF



Poznań Gate connected
with Ostrów Tumski
by a footbridge
on Cybina.

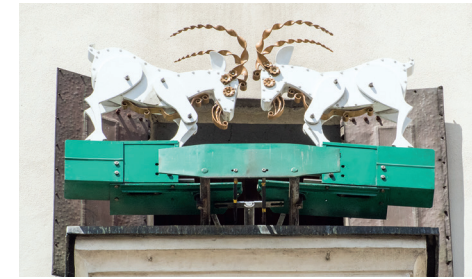
Source: 123RF



Old Market Square with townhouses and the Town Hall. Source: 123RF

Rams on the tower of Poznań Town Hall.

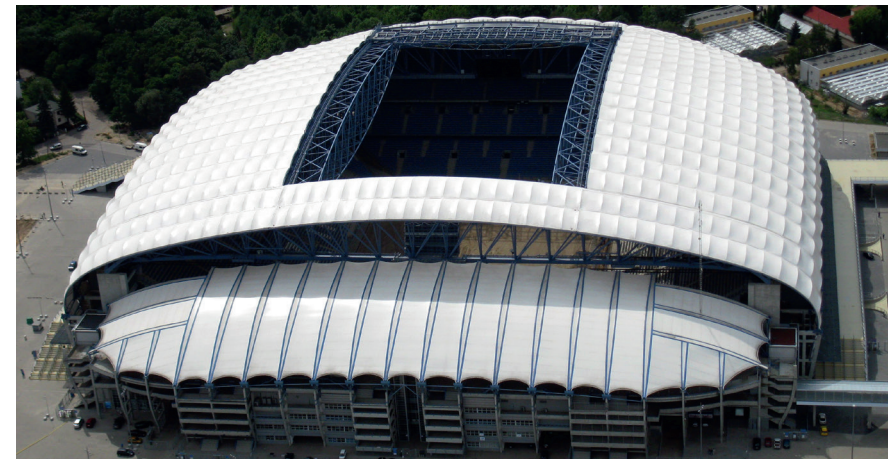
Source: 123RF



Contemporary Poznań is a city with history that reflects the history of Poland. It's the only city mentioned in the national anthem, the former seat of Polish rulers and the first bishopric. One of the most important places for all Poles is the Archcathedral Basilica of St Peter and St Paul in Poznań – the oldest cathedral in Poland and presumed place of baptism of the first Polish ruler Mieszko I. His tomb can be found here to this day. It is no wonder that Poznań remains one of the most important tourist destinations for visitors from Poland and beyond.

The town hall with the figures of two rams, bashing their horns on its tower is among the city's most recognised attractions. Every day at noon, the Poznań bugle call sounds from this tower. The city is home to several museums, an opera house, a philharmonic hall and theatres. Poznań is an important academic centre – a seat of many public and non-public institutions of higher education (including five universities).

Today, Poznań is a home to over half a million people, which makes it the fifth-largest city in Poland in terms of population. As with before the war, the Poznań International Fair remains a symbol of the city, as the most important trade fair centre in this part of Europe and one that is visited by over a million people a year.



City Stadium in Poznań.

Source: 123RF

Poznań remembers



Celebrations of the centenary of the restoration of Polish independence in Wolności Square. The celebrations featured demonstrations and shows by the Historical Re-enactment Group of the 7th Horse Artillery Regiment, as well as the presentation of military equipment and vehicles.

Source: Greater Poland Voivodeship Office in Poznań



Celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the Greater Poland Uprising were attended, among others, by the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda.

Source: Krzysztof Sitkowski / Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland



Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki attended the celebrations commemorating the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the victorious Greater Poland Uprising.

Source: Greater Poland Voivodeship Office in Poznań

The years 2018-2019 mark the celebration of important anniversaries for the residents of Poznań. In 2018, Poland celebrated the 100th anniversary of regaining independence and 1050 years of the first bishopric established in Poznań. "Throughout the history of our nation, the Catholic Church has always played an exceptional role, but its mission gained special significance during the times of captivity, partitions and occupation", said the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda.

At the turn of 2018 and 2019, Poznań celebrated the 100th anniversary of the victorious Greater Poland Uprising, after which Poznań and the entire Greater Poland region joined independent Poland. The Grand Theatre hosted the premiere of *Manru*, an opera by Ignacy Jan Paderewski, one of the fathers of independence, whose arrival in Poznań gave an impulse to the outbreak of the uprising. On the 100th anniversary of these events, the residents of Poznań could watch the battles for the city from up close, owing to the show performed in the Old Market Square.

2019 marks the centenary of the University of Poznań (today – the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), as well as the universities that were created out of its various units: the Medical University, University of Life Sciences and Academy of Physical Education. This year marks the 90th anniversary of the Polish National Exhibition in Poznań. This is the time when all Poles recall the interwar period – the time when after 123 years of enslavement, Poland returned to the maps of the world.

Part of the monument to the Greater Poland insurgents in Poznań. Here, the main ceremonies of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the Greater Poland Uprising took place.

Source: Wikipedia



Monument of the Polish Underground State and the Home Army in Poznań.

Source: Wikipedia





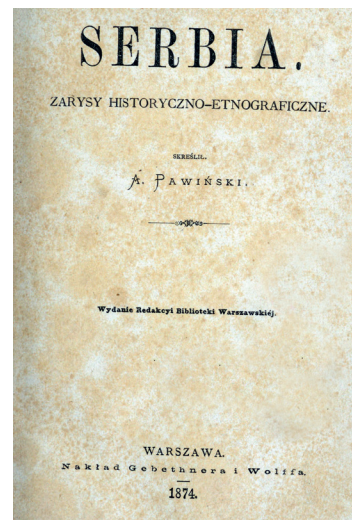
FRIENDSHIP

As evidenced by the first friendship congress, the many sports competitions, lively trade exchange, tourism and the joint cultural initiatives that came about after regaining independence, Poland has always maintained extensive ties with the Balkan nations that go far beyond the typical diplomatic relations. Numerous photographs and publications prove that Poznań was often at the heart of these events. Ours is a story of friendship between nations with a similar history, character and temperament.

Meeting of Yugoslavian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vojislav Marinković (sitting to the right) with Marshal of the Republic of Poland, Józef Piłsudski (sitting to the left). The Marshal and the Minister are accompanied by Branko Lazarević (right), the Extraordinary Deputy and Plenipotentiary Minister of Yugoslavia in Poland, and August Zaleski, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland. Warsaw, December 1931.

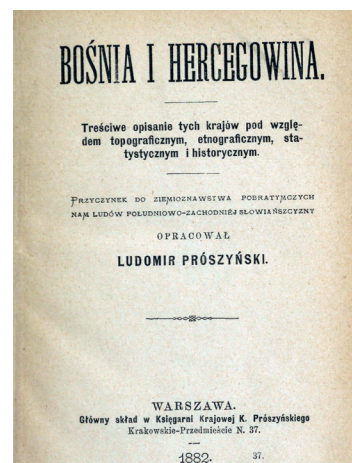
Source: National Digital Archives

Fascination with the Balkans



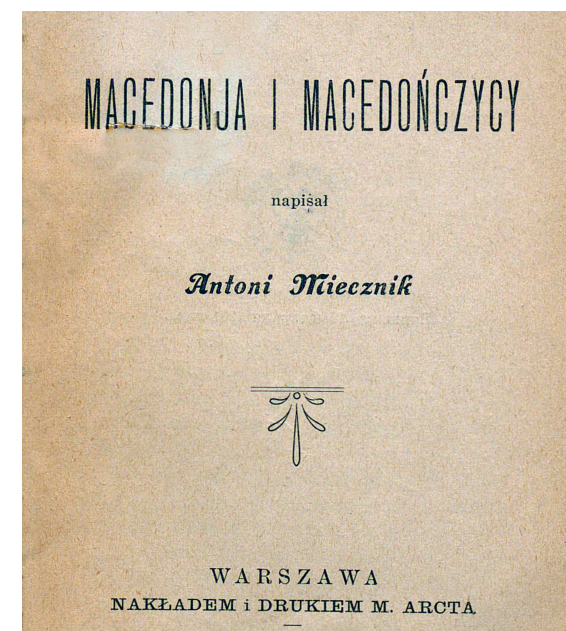
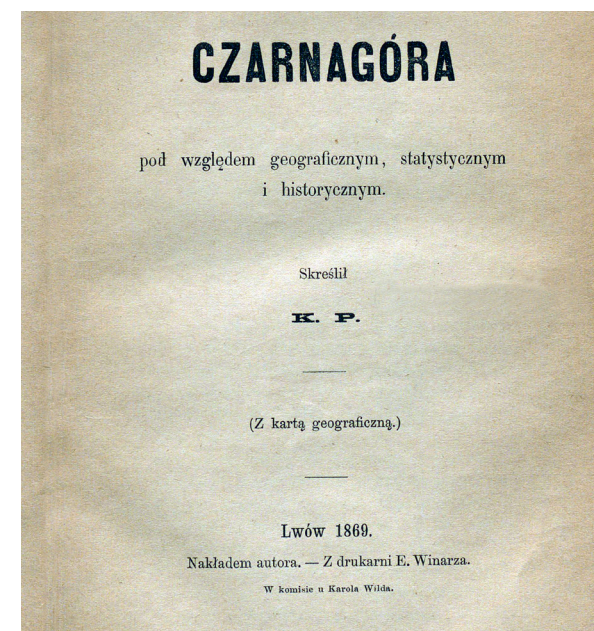
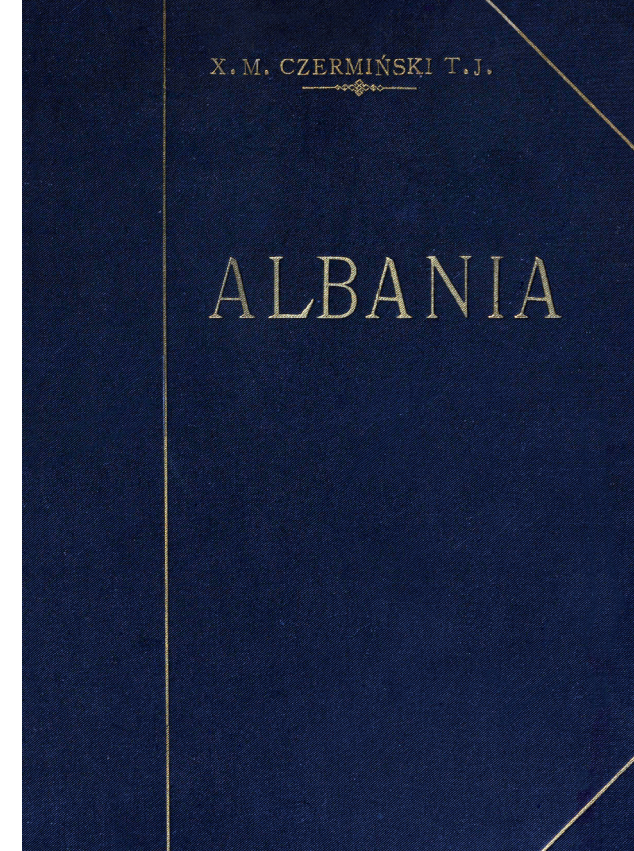
Covers of publications
by Polish authors
from before 1918.

Source: National Library
of Poland



At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, numerous Polish writers, ethnographers, sociologists and historians went to the Balkans and returned with interesting accounts and stories. As a result, Polish readers were introduced to the geography, the flora and fauna, the fascinating history and the customs of the region. Indeed, many travellers found analogies between their own people and the Balkan peoples. Thus, when Albania declared independence in 1912, the eyes of Poles, who have been living under the Partitioning Powers for nearly 120 years, instantly turned towards the country.

“All civilised nations will follow the course of the revival of this country with sympathy and kindness, since its history is an actual and meaningful confirmation of the great truth – that in the life of nations, there are no difficult situations and conditions in which the people are no longer able to do anything to change their fates”. These words of ethnographer Edward Maliszewski, addressed to Polish readers in 1913, sparked new hopes. If the Albanian people can win back their independence, perhaps the Poles would also live to see the coveted freedom?



Montenegro through the eyes of a Polish bard



Budva, Montenegro. Ancient walls with Adriatic Sea. Source: 123RF

Adam Mickiewicz is considered to be one of the greatest Polish poets and dubbed the nation's bard. He was also a political activist, journalist, philosopher and academic professor. In 1840-1844, he gave lectures on Slavic literature at the Collège de France. Mickiewicz searched for features common to all Slavic culture. In his mind, Montenegro became the symbol of steadfastness on his map of Slavic culture. The Polish poet saw the Montenegrin nation as a model of a truly free society.

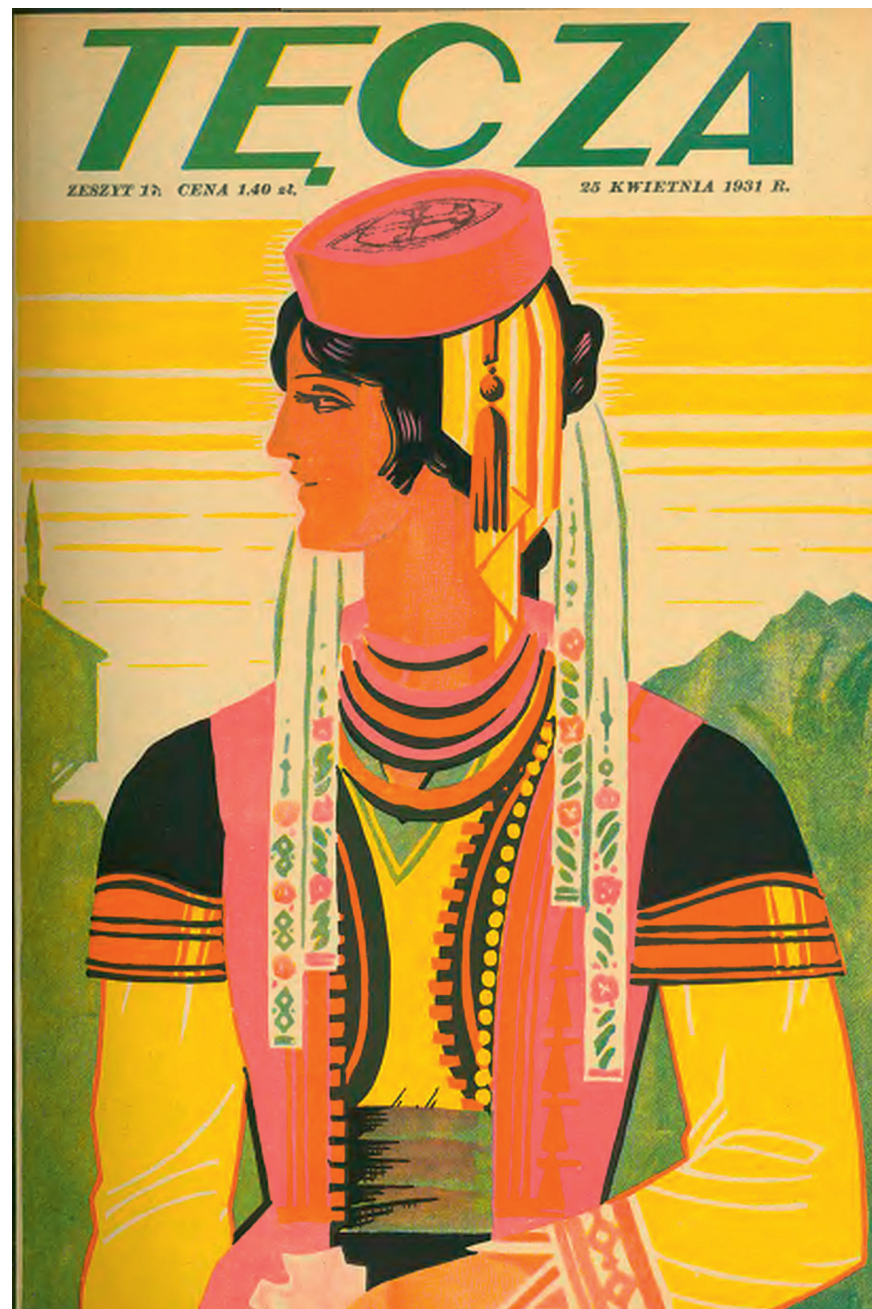
"This small nation, however, was able to maintain its independence. Protected by its inaccessible location and their own courage, they always resisted attacks by Turks, Austrians and, in recent times, the French Empire," Mickiewicz wrote in the early 1840s. "Its history is very interesting for the Slavs, and their social condition deserves their particular attention, since it can serve as a most perfect model of the Slavic community. They do have total freedom – it is supposedly the only truly free country in the world, a country of freedom and equality. The Montenegrins do not care for their status at birth nor wealth, nor do they even want to accept any semblance of hierarchy, so that the people do not have any kind of government at all".



MP 2901 MNW *Portrait of Adam Mickiewicz on the Ayu-Dag Cliff*, original painting by Walenty Wańkowicz, unknown copyist; 19th century, oil on canvas; 51 × 42 cm.

Source: Krzysztof Wilczyński
/ National Museum in Warsaw

The wealth of folklore



Above: group of Montenegrins in national costumes, illustration from the book *Za Dunajem (Bulgaria, Serbia, Czarnogóra)* podług dzieła Janka z Grzegorzewic published in Lviv in 1904.

Source: National Library of Poland

On the left: cover of the Poznań-based *Tęcza* magazine (special edition devoted to the culture of the Balkans).

Source: Lesser Poland Digital Library

Poles were happy to find familiar motifs and themes in the culture of the Balkan nations. The embroidery adorning Southern Slavic costumes reminded them of the well-known elements of Hutsul, Krakow and Podkarpacie folklore; although Poles were able to notice common elements even in more exotic costumes from Herzegovina.

“In Herzegovina, near Popowski Blat, I was struck by the half-masculine costumes worn by women, comprising of puffed, knee-length trousers made of canvas, worn with black stockings, and a head covering that strictly resembled the Belarusian ‘zawojka’ hat. [...]. The wide, frayed sleeves of the shirt are similar to those worn by our Hutsuls”, wrote a journalist of the Poznań-based *Tęcza* magazine. “Near Sarajevo, the women wear thick black ankle pants and black embroidered jackets. On the other hand, Serbia and Macedonia love their white cloth, densely embroidered with red thread.”

Cover of *O Skanderbegu Macedonie albańskim księżęciu* [On Skanderbeg of Macedonia, the Albanian Prince] by Marcin Bielski, a Polish writer, historian, and satirist. The story of Skanderbeg, the famous national Albanian hero, is a part of the turbulent history of the Balkan peoples and the Turks. In the 16th century, Europe was deeply fascinated with the story.

Source: Królcza Jama antiquarian bookstore



Albanka z archidiecezji Antiwarskiej.

Rodzina góralska na targu w Skodrze.



Mieszkaniec gór Hoti.

Dziewczyna z Kroi.

Illustrations in Marcin Czerwiński's book *Albania. Zarysy etnograficzne, kulturalne i religijne, 1893*.

Source: National Library of Poland

Poles in Vojvodina



Descendants of the Wisła highlanders in Ostojićevo during the visit of Andrzej Wantuła, bishop of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, 1967.

Source: Archive of the Evangelical Church in Ostojićevo

At the beginning of the 19th century, highlander Protestants from Wisła settled in Vojvodina, which at that time was under Hungarian rule. Miners from the Beskids came there to sell nitrate. They usually came in summer, but in late autumn they would return to their homeland. Some, however, decided to settle down there for good. Soon they started farming, growing rye, wheat, barley, oats, corn, sugar beet and tobacco. They also readily took up growing the vegetables that were the most popular in their homeland – potatoes and cabbage.

Nowadays, there is still an autochthonous Polish community of about 200 people in Ostojićevo, Serbia. Poles willingly identify themselves as such, they embrace their Polish roots and pray in an Evangelical church built before the war. Some of them also use the Cieszyn dialect.

These self-identifying Serbian-Poles maintain contacts with their homeland both individually and through Polish diaspora organisations. The largest is the Serbian-Polish Friendship Association 'YU-Polonia'. In addition, Ostojićevo has Polish associations cultivating national traditions and children's folklore ensembles.



Emil Bujak, son of Paweł – a teacher and nitrate miner, one of the first settlers in Tisha-Szent-Miklós (Ostojićevo) and their leader. Paweł Bujak actually originated the settlement of highlanders there. The son continued his father's mission and brought great merit to the whole community of former residents of Wisła in Ostojićevo.

Source: Archive of the Evangelical Church in Ostojićevo

Polish settlers in Bosnia



Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Banja Luka Artur Burda surrounded by Polish settlers in Trošelj, 1930s.

Source: National Digital Archives

In the Habsburg era, at the end of the 19th century, several significant groups of Poles emigrated to the Balkans. One of the groups went to Bosnia, near Prnjavor, Banja Luka and Bosanska Gradiška. In one of the Bosnian villages, Novi Martinac, the Poles constituted the vast majority of the inhabitants! The immigrants worked as farmers, blacksmiths and wheelwrights, and their memory is still alive today, as Polish tourists travelling to Bosnia can see for themselves.

In 1934, a journalist of *Kurier Poznański* estimated the number of Polish diaspora in Bosnia at 15,000. Poles kept their traditions and Catholic faith. "Relations with neighbours are good, there have not been any misunderstandings, conflicts nor harassment on the grounds of nationality", the journalist wrote. "A visitor from Poland, visiting Polish diaspora in Bosnia, sees a pleasantly familiar, I dare even say purely Polish landscape, as well as the character of villages and farms. Polish colonists cultivate wheat, rye, barley, oats, potatoes and corn, which is the staple food for the Bosnian populace. [...] Each Polish house usually has a plum orchard – source of the famous Bosnian plums and an excellent plum brandy, the production and sales of which is a significant financial boost for many Polish households."

After the Second World War, about 18,000 Poles were forced to return to their homeland. Nowadays, there are six Polish associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Poles take part in the National Minority Festival of the Municipality of Prnjavor "Little Europe" and in the Dumpling Festival "Pierogiada" in Čelinovac.



Polish settlers in front of the new church and parish in Dubrava (Banja Luka region), 1902.

Source: National Digital Archives



Group of Poles in front of the house of one of the settlers, where the Holy Mass was being celebrated for the first time. Gumjera, 1902.

Source: National Digital Archives

So much alike...



Map of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the *Żołnierz Polski* magazine (No. 50/1929).

Source: National Library of Poland



Extraordinary Deputy and Plenipotentiary Minister of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Jovan D. Milanković, 1928.

Source: National Digital Archives



Michał Kwapiszewski – chargé d'affaires of the diplomatic mission of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Source: National Digital Archives

Twenty days after Poland regained its independence after the end of the World War I and the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established. Within 10 years, the two countries built relationships based on friendship and a shared community of interests. “It is a well-known fact that [...] our nations have everything in common and nothing that divides us”. This declaration came from Michał Kwapiszewski, chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Poland in Belgrade, in a publication from 1928, the aim of which was to present the history and everyday life of a country that was friendly to Poles.

“My words are not an attempt at flattery, but if they do seem as such, please accept them as sincere and kind. A beautiful woman can always be told that she is beautiful,” wrote Jovan D. Milanković, the Plenipotentiary Minister of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, in his response. “I loved Poland before I discovered it – it was thanks to my contacts with Poles, which I established during my diplomatic career and in public life. [...] May the histories of Poland and my homeland – so beautiful and glorious, so much alike, lead us in the future, so that we may still work towards the common good, using the foundations established by our fathers, upon which we are to build our homelands”.



Map of Poland printed on a postcard from the interwar period.

Source: National Library of Poland

Polish-Albanian relations



Ahmed Zogu I
with his wife
Geraldine
and her sisters
at the Central
Railway Station
in Warsaw,
July 1939.

Source: National
Digital Archives



Bishop Franciszek Malczyński (1829–1908)

Source: Wikipedia



Prof. Stanisław Zuber (1883–1947)

Source: Wikipedia

“The 7th of April 1937 may be considered as the date of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. On that day, the Envoy of the Republic of Poland in Athens, Minister Władysław Schwarzburg-Gunther was specially accredited to Albania to attend the wedding ceremony of King Zogu I and Princess Geraldine”, said Karol Bachura, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Albania, in an interview on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In July 1939, a few months after the Italian army entered Albania, Ahmed Zogu arrived in Poland accompanied by his wife and three-month-old son. The family visited Lviv (until 1939 a Polish city known as Lwów) and Warsaw, after which they went to Vilnius (Wilno) and then Lithuania.

When describing the history of Polish-Albanian relations, it is impossible not to mention a few distinguished people. At the end of the 19th century, Bishop Franciszek Malczyński served as bishop of the diocese of Alessio (Lezhë) in northern Albania. According to his memoirs, he lived in a highlander hut in the village of Kalmeti and used to visit churches and institutions... on horseback.

Another Pole who spent a large part of his life in Albania was Prof. Stanisław Zuber, an eminent expert in the geology of oil deposits. From 1927 to 1947, he was looking for deposits in Albania. Apart from this, he developed a tectonic map of the country in 1:4,000,000 scale, a geological map (1:200,000) and a map of minerals (1:300,000). He is credited for the discoveries of the two main oil extraction regions in Albania (Kuçova and Patos). In 2011, a monument to Prof. Stanisław Zuber was erected in Kuçova. One of the streets in Tirana is named after him.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Belgrade.

Source: Wikipedia



Representatives of the Polish team lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on behalf of the Polish Football Association after a Yugoslavia-Poland football match in Belgrade. The photo shows the President of the Polish Football Association, General Władysław Bończa-Uzdowski (first from the left), a representative of the Republic of Poland, Ksawery Glinka (third from the left), and Józef Kotlarczyk (fourth from the left), 1934.

Source: National Digital Archives

Belgrade and Warsaw – two capitals intertwined for many years not only by friendly relations, but also by special places for national identity and historical memory: each nation's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The monument in Warsaw was unveiled in 1925 under the colonnade of the Saxon Palace, to commemorate those who died in the struggle for independence. The symbolic grave houses the remains of a nameless soldier brought from the Cemetery of the Defenders of Lviv – the burial ground of the young defenders of the Polish city of Lviv during the Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Bolshevik wars.

An eternal flame burns at the grave, and a military guard of honour stands on duty, watching and protecting the tomb. It is the place where the most important state ceremonies are held to this day. In the interwar period, numerous Balkan delegations visited the monument.

The tomb on Mount Avala at the foot of Belgrade was completed in 1938. The monument was erected on the initiative of the first king of Yugoslavia, Aleksander I Karađorđević, to commemorate soldiers killed during the World War I and the victims of Balkan wars. Many Polish delegates, both representatives of state authorities and ordinary citizens (including sports teams), have visited Mount Avala.



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw. Source: 123RF



Wreath being laid upon the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw by the Extraordinary Deputy and Plenipotentiary Minister of Yugoslavia in Poland, Aleksander Vukčević (second from the left behind the wreath), accompanied by the deputy head of Diplomatic Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Aleksander Łubieński (third from the left), and the staff of the diplomatic mission, 1938.

Source: National Digital Archives

Friendship match in Poznań



Yugoslavian team after their arrival at the Poznań railway station, 25 October 1931.

Source: National Digital Archives



Team captains: Jerzy Bułanow (left) and Milutin Ivković (right) exchange flower bouquets before the match.

Source: National Digital Archives

Six goals to three – that was the final result of the match between Poland and Yugoslavia at the Warta Poznań stadium, which took place in 1931. The result was a surprise for both teams, because at the time the Polish team had lost a number of games, while the guests from the Balkans were generally considered to be very strong opponents.

“Despite today’s defeat, we are glad that we could face the team of our dear brotherly nation of Poland, with which we have a long-established cordial friendship,” the head of the Yugoslavian national team summed up the game. “Let me express my gratitude for the great hospitality of the Polish sports authorities and the residents of Poznań, which we have been experiencing from the second we arrived in Poland.”

After the game, which was attended by 15,000 supporters, the footballers toured the city and, according to the press, drank strong black coffee in Adria, one of Poznań’s cafés. At the evening banquet, there was no shortage of toasts to the Polish-Yugoslavian friendship.

20 groszy

Poznań, niedziela 25 października 1931

Dziś 12 stron

DZIENNIK POZNAŃSKI

PISMO POLITYCZNE

POŚWIĘCONE OBRONIE INTERESÓW ROLNICTWA HANDLU PRZEMYSŁU I RZEMIOSŁA

33-90 i 11-77.

ogniska Nadolazak dragih nam jugoslavenskih gostiju

Na naročitim veseljem pozdravljamo u starim bedemima našega grada ovi, koji su nama došli na utakmice, a to su jugoslavenski nogometaši. Veselimo se što više toga radi, što dolazak taj pruži nama mogućnost opetovanja takrene i srdačne simpatije, koju imamo spram junačkog jugoslavenskog naroda.

Idea poljsko-jugoslavenske saradnje osobito uspeva u Poznanju, što se mora zahvaliti Poljsko-jugoslavenskom Društvu, koje celū niz godina uspešno radi na približenju naših naroda. Sećamo se na tom mestu jugoslavenske Akademije lanijske godine, koja je bila jedna velika manifestacija prijateljstva Poznanja spram Jugoslavenskog naroda i Njegovog Velikantva Kralja Aleksandra I, koji je oživotvorio Veliku, Ujedinjenu Kraljevinu Jugoslaviju.

Sport, koji igra tako veliku ulogu u današnjem vremenu je svakako jedno od najboljih sredstava za sklopljenje i to čvršćenje prijateljstva.

Pozdravljamo Vas draga jugoslavenska braćo u našem gradu, i uveravamo Vas o našem iskrenom i srdačnom prijateljstvu spram Vašeg Velikog Naroda. Neka Vaš dolazak doprinese što više daljnjem razvoju uzajamnih odnosa i što čvršćanju prijateljstva između naših slavenskih naroda.

ęcej zlowrogich sil ni? Przeciw domo-
sje oparcie, serdecz-
ego życia. Wyga-
zinnym.
i uwagi na to. Nikt
czeststwa.
jeń domowego ogni-
a? Ależ pna dziś
pracują zarobkowo;
a domem, często na
generacji niema już
domu dobrze jeśli
kolenia. Wieczorem,
i spotyka się może.
e już tylko tem, „co
cie zawodowe, życie
kich tak dalece, że
sprawy w a ż n i j-

obecna tylko fizycz-
je się swemu gnia-
cynującymi złudami



J. Kr. M. Aleksander I
Król Zjednoczonej Jugosławii.

Z prawdziwą radością witamy w prastarych murach naszego grodu, przybyłych do nas na niedzypaństwowe zawody, sportowców słoneczni Jugosławii.

Cieszymy się temwięcej, że przyjazd ich daje nam możność dalszego potwierdzenia głębokich i serdecznych uczuć sympatii, jaką żywimy dla bohaterstwa Narodu Jugosłowiańskiego.

Idea współpracy polsko-jugosłowiańskiej szczególnie silnie rozwija się w Poznańskim, gdzie już od kilku lat Towarzystwo Polsko-Jugosłowiańskie prowadzi owocną pracę nad zbliżeniem obu naszych narodów. Przypominamy tu choćby akademję słowiańską w roku ubiegłym, która stała się potężną manifestacją uczuć Poznanja dla Narodu Jugosłowiańskiego i Jego Królewskiej Mości Aleksandra I, twórcy Wielkiego Zjednoczonego Królestwa Jugosławii.

Sport, który tak dominująca odgrywa rolę w dzisiejszych czasach, jest jednym z największych i najsukuteczniejszych środków nawiązywania oraz zacieśnienia węzłów przyjaźni.

Witając Was, drodzy Bracia Jugosłowianie, w naszym grodzie, zapewniamy Was o szczerej, serdecznej dla Waszego Wielkiego Narodu przyjaźni. Przybycie Wasze niech przyczyni się do dalszego rozwoju wzajemnych stosunków i tem silniejszego zacieśnienia węzłów, wiekami utrwalonych, przyjaźni między naszymi słowiańskimi narodami.

Ziemia w

Mamy, my Polacy swoje Zayderz — w czasach, gdy d sie i zwalnianie temp landji, posuwa się m dnieł osuszona i z k. Uchodzą ono ut i dlatego, że od daw ciżali nas do swej. Lecz to, co Holandia że się w porównanie no się wyłącznie pri ten najmniej w Euro zagrożony przez ży powstrzymywane pr wadzi niewiedzią d

Z fronta tej ofer wszy komunikat zw nych z początkiem r wydało pierwszy pi sję tego roku klebły czono w tym miesi pierwszy cieb i pra helmine, a na banki rów i pracowników derzee, każdy z 300 taki i pierwszy „mot

Jest to dopiero v mego planu osusze zenie robót przewi i wiedzy Niderlandy cie, która otrzyma w d będzie 10-ta czę kraju.

Kto spojryz na stowsi solbe latwo n prowincji, wydierat wyspec, oddzielacy się z reszta kraju p tryczy przybliżona i półwyspu, aż do Kan Zayderze wewnątrz przekształcona zosta to wielkim Kanalem

On the day of the match between Poland and Yugoslavia, a welcome message in the language of the guests was published on the first page of Dziennik Poznański.

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library

Hazena: Polish and Yugoslavian specialty



Before World War II, hazena – a game resembling team handball – enjoyed great popularity in some European countries. The best teams in the world included Polish, Czechoslovakian and Yugoslavian national representations. On 19 September 1935, the Yugoslavian women's hazena team came to Poznań to play a match with their Polish counterparts. The game ended with the guest's decisive victory – eight goals to two. A banquet was held in honour of the players, and a dance party was organised in the salons of the Polish-Yugoslavian Society. The athletes also had the opportunity to tour the city. Earlier, the Yugoslavians played an international match against the Polish team at the Marshal Józef Piłsudski Polish Army Stadium in Warsaw.

Polish and Yugoslavian hazena players at the stadium in Poznań after a match that ended with the victory of the Yugoslavian team (8:2), September 1935.

Source: National Digital Archives

Adriatic and Baltic Sea



Above: Opening of the Yugoslavian travel agency in Warsaw, March 1932.

Source: National Digital Archives



Left: Opening of the Yugoslavian tourist exhibition in the Colosseum on Nowy Świat Street in Warsaw, April 1931. In the photo you can see Branko Lazarević (second from the right).

Source: National Digital Archives

“My goal is to get Yugoslavian tourists interested in the Polish sea and to make Polish tourists more aware of our Adriatic Sea,” Branko Lazarević claimed in the *Kurier Poznański* magazine. “This year, our travel agency, ‘Putnik’, will establish a branch in Warsaw, to direct the promotion of the Yugoslavian sea here, and, at the same time, to support our tourist trips to Poland”. According to Branko Lazarević’s announcement, a Yugoslavian travel agency was opened in Warsaw in 1932 and a tourist exhibition was organised.

The Polish-Balkan friendship in the interwar period resulted in the growth of Polish tourism to the Balkans, and was conducive to visits of Balkan tourists to Poland. Both sides promoted their tourist destinations and popularized trips and stays. Many tourist brochures and guides were created at that time, in which the most beautiful places in the Balkans were presented to Poles. Many of these places are still among the favourite holiday destinations for Poles, who continue to enjoy exploring the uniqueness of Albania and Montenegro.

WYCIEZKI WYPOCZYNKOWE DO JUGOSŁAWII

Kolejowe: 3—26 czerwca, lipca, sierpnia i września.

Autokarowe: 18. VI—12. VII, 3.—27. VII, 18. VII—12. VIII, 3.—27. VIII, 18. VIII—12. IX, 3.—27. IX.



Ceny od zł. 330.—

Zgłoszenia na wycieczki z datą 3, do 20 poprzedzającego miesiąca; na wycieczki z datą 18—do 7 każdego miesiąca, przyjmują wszystkie placówki

ORBISU



WIOSENNA WYCIEZKA DO JUGOSŁAWJI

6.IV—23.IV

zł. 450.—

WAGONS - LITS // COOK
Warszawa, Krakowskie Przedmieście 42-44

WARSZAWA — Nalewki 28-30.	ŁÓDŹ — Piotrkowska 64.
GDYNIA — Podjezdowa.	POZNAŃ — Pierackiego 12.
KATOWICE — Dyrekcjońska 9.	WILNO — Mickiewicza 6.
KRAKÓW — Sławkowska 12.	ZAKOPANE — Kościuszki.
LWÓW — Plac Hallicki 15.	

Details of trips from Poland to Yugoslavia in the 1930s. Tourists could choose between train and coach trips.

Source: National Library of Poland



Cover of a guide to Yugoslavia, 1935.

Source: National Library of Poland

Travelling through Yugoslavia – a guide to Yugoslavia for Poles published by the “Putnik” Association for Travel and Tourism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Source: National Library of Poland

Visits and descriptions



“Albania is a small country, and it is no wonder that its capital – Tirana – has only 40,000 residents. Despite this, the king wants to ensure its representative character. This is the district where the new ministry buildings are being erected. The photo shows a large, unfilled excavation in front of it. The photograph was taken from the roof of the prefecture” (*Ilustracja Polska*, 1938).

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library

“Old and new Albania, East and West meet on Zog I Boulevard – Tirana’s main transit artery” (*Ilustracja Polska*, 1938).

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library



“An old man sitting on the doorstep of his home on Zog I Boulevard in Tirana, gazes with contempt upon the quickly Europeanised city” (*Ilustracja Polska*, 1938).

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library

In the interwar period, Poles were, by all possible means, encouraged to visit the Balkans, and these travels resulted in numerous travelogues and photo reports. In 1938, *Ilustracja Polska* magazine published a richly illustrated text devoted to Albania (some of its elements have been reproduced on these pages).

“Tirana has three attractive points of interest – the royal palace – a villa standing in the middle of a garden surrounded by a wall, a casino – a Chinese style pavilion located in the geographical centre of the city, and a tennis club on the way to Durazzo [...]. There, they play tennis and drink a lot of whiskey, while gossiping about the recent royal affairs [...]. Adding to this the image of the streets of Tirana, with highlanders descending from their mountains in costumes decorated with colourful embroideries and with groups of veiled Muslim women, the most perfect decoration can be seen right in front of our eyes,” said the author in 1929 in his travelogue published in *Głos Poranny*.

Another journalist colourfully described his meeting with one of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina. “I told him I was Polish. The man nodded his head happily. ‘E. ti si Poljak? Poljak, Czech, Srb, Rus svi mi bratia pravoslavni!’ [original spelling]. The idea of the Slavic brotherhood is deeply rooted among Yugoslavians, the simple people consider themselves to be Slavs, and – if in the eyes of the resident of Herzegovina I was perceived to be an Orthodox Christian, it is only because Orthodoxy is a symbol of Christianity in their country in general.”



“Map of Albania with the Strait of Otranto, which closes the Adriatic Sea” (*Ilustracja Polska*, 1938).

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library



“A few years ago, compulsory schooling was introduced in the entire country. All school-age children learn and take part in military training from the youngest age” (*Ilustracja Polska*, 1938).

Source: Greater Poland Digital Library

Tourist exchange



Students and teachers of the State Institute of Theatre Art in Warsaw during a tour of the Balkans in 1934. The photograph shows a group at the monument to Bishop Josip Strossmayer.

Source: National Digital Archives

Trip of journalists and readers of *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny* around the Balkans, Greece and Italy under the slogan "For the Sun, which unites nations". Farewell at the Krakow train station, 1936.

Source: National Digital Archives



"Let's go to Yugoslavia! This destination gained popularity and notoriety in Poland, since for a long time we have been visiting there alone and in numerous tourist groups – including three large groups from Poznań last year. We have been going there to establish cultural and commercial relations, for tourist purposes, as well as for longer stays. We don't have to repeat that slogan. However, in view of the current Polish-Yugoslavian Congress, it is time for a different slogan, this time addressed to our dear guests: Come and visit us! Get to know us and discover our beautiful country, our centuries-old culture and contemporary efforts. Come with us to the peaks of the mighty Tatra Mountains, to the darkness of the fir forests of the Czarnokora [original spelling], to the shores of Pomeranian lakes, to the sandy ribbon of our seaside beaches, crowned by the beautiful jewel of Gdynia. Listen to the rhythm of our Silesian trains. Lift your spirits at the proud Wawel Castle, learn about our heroism at the walls of Lviv and Vilnius, and you will see that people will wait for you with their arms wide open, wherever you go, dear brothers from the Slavic South". This was written by *Dziennik Poznański* in 1931. Trips for youth and specific professional groups were held, including those for doctors and foresters who had come to Poland from the Balkans. Warsaw students and teachers, journalists and readers of *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny*, in turn, travelled to Yugoslavia from Poland.



Journalists and readers of *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny* on the beach in Yugoslavia.

Source: National Digital Archives



Polish journalists welcomed at the Belgrade train station by Yugoslavian journalists, 1931.

Source: National Digital Archives

Interested in everything: Prof. Józef Obrębski in Macedonia



Józef Obrębski
in Macedonia
– self portrait, ca. 1932.

Source: Special
Collections
and Archives,
W.E.B. Du Bois Library,
University
of Massachusetts
in Amherst

Prof. Józef Obrębski (1905-1967) was an ethnologist, Slavist and sociologist – and the student of the world-famous anthropologist, Bronisław Malinowski. From August 1932 to March 1933, he stayed among the highlanders of Macedonian Porecz – a small, traditional community living in significant isolation from modern civilisation. His research focused on the structure of a patriarchal family, the role of women, everyday activities, customs and rituals.

In less than eight months, the researcher gained the sympathy of the inhabitants of the village of Volče and surrounding settlements. “Obrębski was known in the village as Josif and was really liked by the people. [...] When somebody died, Josif was also here, among his own people so to say, since he lived with them in the same village. When people went to the mill, he went with them. When there was a need to lever a rock, he was also there. [...] Somebody was chopping wood, he did the same. He literally wanted to see and try everything. He was interested in everything that was connected to his profession”. These details come via Ariton Veselinovski, who did not meet Obrębski in person, but based his work on the memories of the inhabitants of Porecz.

Obrębski created an invaluable collection of several hundred photographs, saving for history the family celebrations of the Macedonian highlanders (holidays, baptisms, weddings, funerals), their traditional medicine and their work. Indeed, “whatever Josif found, he took a photo of it”, the inhabitants of Porecz recalled. The story of Obrębski’s photographs was quite turbulent in itself – the negatives survived the German occupation and the Warsaw Uprising, resting in metal boxes buried in one of Warsaw’s gardens. Today the photos can be found in the collections of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.



Ethnographer in the field, ca. 1932.

Source: Special Collections and Archives,
W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts in Amherst



Kinship: Grandmother
and granddaughter,
ca. 1932.

Source: Special
Collections
and Archives,
W.E.B. Du Bois Library,
University
of Massachusetts
in Amherst

Slavic Falcons



Slavic Sokol Movement Rally in Belgrade, 1930. Members of the Polish “Sokół” group marching along the city streets.

Source: National Digital Archives

By the end of the 19th century, the Sokol [Falcon] movement grew dynamically among many Slavic nations. In addition to the sporting aspect and physical fitness, the organisation put strong emphasis on patriotic spirit. Such organisations were also established in Serbia, Macedonia and other countries.

In 1929, Poznań hosted the Slavic Sokol Movement Rally. Nearly 200 attendees came to Poland from the Balkans. A special train carrying visitors dressed in beautiful, colourful national costumes was welcomed with an orchestra. “Poznań was brimming with Sokol people [...] filling the streets and public places. No wonder – after all, the number of attendees equalled the fourth of the population of Poznań! [...] The streets, along which Sokol troops marched in lines abreast were packed with droves of people, watching them and standing right next to each other. I don’t think there was any resident of Poznań who did not go out on the streets to see the Falcons”, read one of the reports from the rally. It was unanimous that the event confirmed the unity and brotherhood of the Slavic nations.

A year later, a rally of Sokol organizations – with the participation of Polish Falcons – took place in Belgrade. “What a wealth of people and costumes! Ruggedly handsome Montenegrins, Albanians, Bosnians, crowds of colourful Falcons, women in folk costumes, [...] officers wearing white sweatshirts and straw boaters, others wearing typical Serbian hats, lots of guests – crowds of people packing the main arteries of the city”, noted Prof. Kazimierz Skarbowski, who took part in the rally.



Slavic Sokol Movement Rally in Poznań, 1929.

Source: National Digital Archives



Group of Polish rally participants during a parade through Belgrade, 1930.

Source: National Digital Archives

Unity: Around the Slavic linden tree



Choirs participating in the Slavic Congress of Singers, May 1929.

Source: National Digital Archives



“In all history of Poland, there has never been such a huge and successful singing convention and such a brotherhood of Slavic nations, made possible thanks to songs”, claimed *Przewodnik Katolicki*, a magazine published in Greater Poland. In May 1929, the Slavic Congress of Singers took place in Poznań, attended by 18-20,000 singers from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. To commemorate this event, a Slavic linden tree was planted at the building of the Opera House on Wały Wazów Street, as a symbol of friendship and unity of nations. The tree was cut down by the Germans after the outbreak of World War II.

Before this happened, Poznań had the opportunity to listen to songs from the Balkans once more. In 1937, as part of a tour of Poland, the city hosted the Obilić academic choir from Belgrade. The concert took place in the university lecture hall. The guests toured the city, laid flowers at the Monument of Gratitude, and their stay concluded with a ball held at the Bazar Hotel.

Members of the Obilić choir after laying a wreath at the Monument of Gratitude in Poznań, April 1937.

Source: National Digital Archives

Celebrating together



Celebration of the Yugoslavian national holiday in Poznań in December 1932. The photograph shows representatives of the authorities and the organisers of the celebration against a backdrop featuring a portrait of the King of Yugoslavia, Aleksander I Karadorđević, in the hall of the Poznań University of Economics.

Source: National Digital Archives



Józef Piłsudski's name day celebrations in Belgrade.

Source: National Digital Archives



Corpus Christi celebrations in Łowicz, with deputy Branko Lazarević in the middle (with a walking stick in hand), June 1933.

Source: National Digital Archives

In the 1930s, celebrations of the national holiday of Yugoslavia were hosted in Warsaw and Poznań, along with numerous official commemorations, with events widely announced and described in the press. “The Polish-Yugoslavian Association is organising a festive Yugoslavian celebration to commemorate the unification of Yugoslavia and the birthday of King Aleksander I. The programme of the celebration includes speeches [...] and a concert [...] featuring solely works by Yugoslavian composers”.

“Manifestation of Polish-Yugoslavian friendship” was the title of an article presenting the event in *Dziennik Poznański*. According to the author, the Association’s events are never a failure and they already have an established good reputation. The celebration was attended by around 100 participants.

In Warsaw, the birthday of the heir to the throne, Peter II Karadorđević, was also elaborately celebrated. A preserved photograph from 1936 shows a joyful crowd coming out of the church after the service on the occasion of his 13th birthday.

Representatives of the Balkan countries were glad to take part in the celebrations important to Poles, and there are preserved photos of deputy Lazarević during the Corpus Christi procession in Łowicz and during the opening ceremony of the decorative arts department of the National Museum in Warsaw. In Belgrade, Marshal Piłsudski’s name day was celebrated every year without a fail, and in 1930, the country commemorated the 10th anniversary of the great victory of Poles over the Bolsheviks. “No foreign country has ever celebrated this holiday as magnificently as the Yugoslavians did in Belgrade,” claimed the report in *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny*. In addition to this, the Plenipotentiary Minister of Yugoslavia in Poland, Prvislav Grisogono, attended the New Year’s party held by the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki, at the Royal Castle in Warsaw.

Solidarity at watershed moments



Funeral ceremony in Warsaw in honour of the assassinated King of Yugoslavia, Aleksander I Karadorđević, 18 November 1934. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Józef Beck (first from the left), Minister of Post and Telegraphs Emil Kaliński (second from the left), Minister of Communications Michał Butkiewicz (third from the left), and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Szembek (first from the right at the back).

Source: National Digital Archives

Poland and Balkans expressed their solidarity in the most difficult moments of their respective histories. The death of Aleksander I Karadorđević, who was assassinated on 9 October 1934, was undoubtedly the moment of reckoning for Yugoslavia. Poland organised official mourning ceremonies as a gesture of solidarity with Yugoslavia. The following account was published in *Czas* 18 October 1934: "Ambassador Extraordinary of the President of the Republic of Poland, General Bolesław Wieniawa-Długoszewski, went to Belgrade with Captain Makowiecki in order to pay last tributes to the late king. Immediately upon arrival, Ambassador Wieniawa-Długoszewski, accompanied by other members of the mission [...] signed the royal book [...]. The same train brought a delegation of the Polish-Yugoslavian parliamentary group, including the Deputy Speaker of the Senate, Bogucki, a number of Deputies, including Dyboski, Hutten-Czapski, Walewski and the Secretary of the Senate, Mohl [...]. The Ambassador [...], surrounded by the entire Polish delegation and members of the mission, laid a wreath on the coffin of the late king".

The Yugoslavians commiserated with the Poles less than a year later, when Marshal Józef Piłsudski passed away on 12 May 1935. Mourning ceremonies were held in Belgrade, and the Marshal's funeral was attended by a large Yugoslavian delegation, including: "President of the Senate, Pioja, Senators: Ivković, Nemeć and Popović and Deputies: Dimitrović, Kovać, Sokić and Stefanović. The Yugoslavian army was represented by General Aračić and Colonel Muria. Deputy Lazarević represented the Belgrade government as an extraordinary delegate."



Funeral ceremony in Warsaw in honour of the assassinated King of Yugoslavia, Aleksander I Karadorđević, 18 November 1934. Extraordinary Deputy, Branko Lazarević (on the left in a top hat) and his wife.

Source: National Digital Archives



Funeral ceremony in honour of the Marshal of Poland, Józef Piłsudski, in Belgrade, May 1935. Władysław Schwarzbürg-Gunther (second from the right), Extraordinary Deputy and Plenipotentiary Minister of Poland in Yugoslavia, greets the representative of the King of Yugoslavia before the funeral service in the cathedral.

Source: National Digital Archives



Funeral ceremony in honour of the Marshal of Poland, Józef Piłsudski, in Belgrade.

Source: National Digital Archives

1931: Congress of Polish-Yugoslavian Friendship



“Poznań, often deservedly referred to as the economic capital of Poland, can claim the right to the honour of receiving Yugoslavian guests within its walls because of more than just economic reasons. That right is given above all because of the sentiments for Yugoslavia, particularly visible among its residents,” wrote *Dziennik Poznański* on the day of the inauguration of the first Congress of Polish-Yugoslavian Friendship in April 1931.

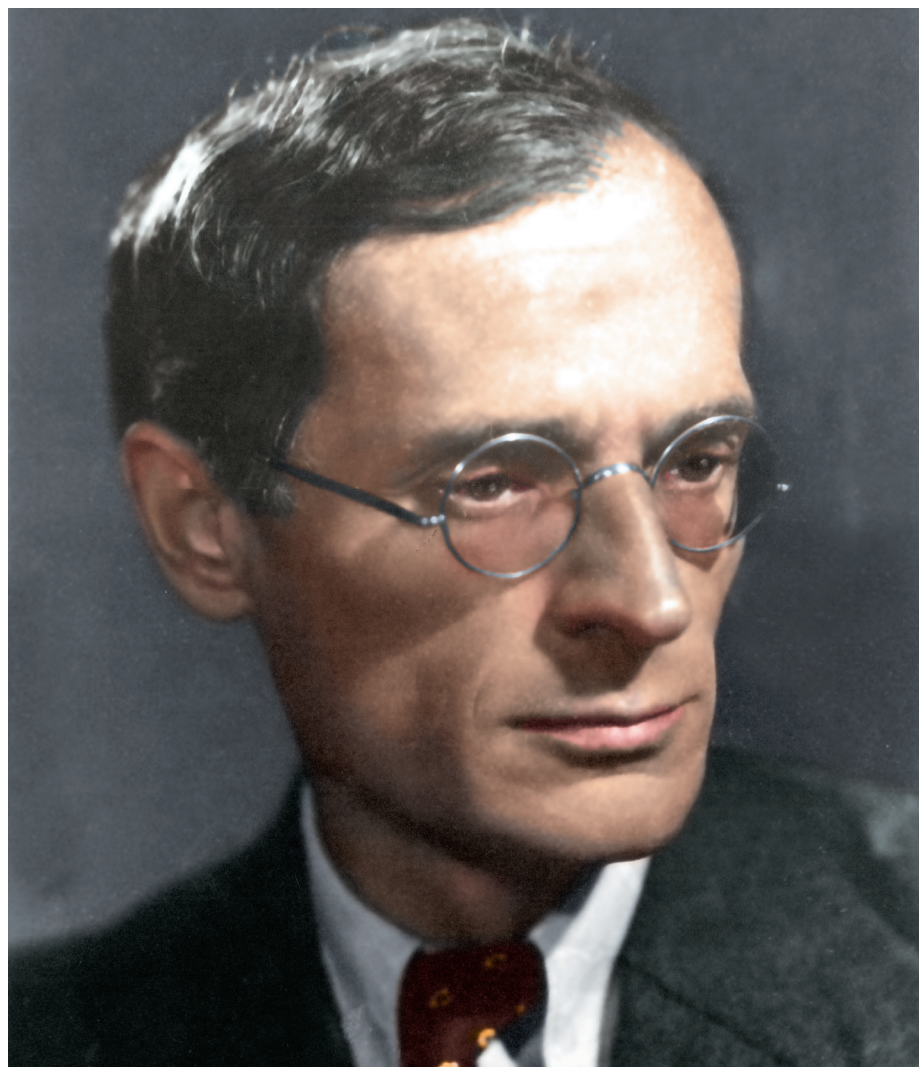
The event was hosted in numerous Polish cities, with its economic part taking place in Poznań. The visitors – representatives of academia, industry, trade, media, art and literature – came from Belgrade, Sarajevo, Skopje and Novi Sad. The economic debates focused on tourism, communications and trade prospects in the iron, sugar and wine industries. They toured Poznań and local industrial plants.

“We want to show our Yugoslavian brothers everything that is the best about Poland... to teach them about our achievements... to open up our Slavic heart in the spirit of Old Polish hospitality,” these were the goals of the Congress, outlined in *Dziennik Poznański* by Fr. Władysław Kneblewski, President of the Polish-Yugoslavian League, and they were carried out fully.

Participants of the Congress of Polish-Yugoslavian Friendship in Poznań, April 1931. In the first row, second from the right, Voivode of Poznań, Roger Raczyński, third – chargé d'affaires of Yugoslavia in Poland, Ivo de Giulli, fourth – Minister of Industry and Trade, Aleksander Prystor. Third left – President of the Polish-Yugoslavian League, Fr. Władysław Kneblewski.

Source: National Digital Archives

Prof. Mieczysław Małecki: Precursor of Balkan Studies in Poland



Prof. Mieczysław Małecki
(1903–1946)

Source: Family Archive

Excerpt from
Prof. Mieczysław
Małecki's *Dwie gwary
macedońskie* [Two
Macedonian Dialects]
dictionary. "At present,
it is the only complete
dictionary of a specific
Macedonian dialect.
Slavic studies owe
a lot to this work,
considering
that in the villages
Małecki explored
the people no longer
speak Macedonian",
wrote Prof. Jerzy
Rusek in 2003.

Source: National
Library of Poland

A

abažija *m.*, -iji *pl.* 'handlarz sukna' S, W; abažiji prudāvaya gri-
zuvi '... sprzedawali sukno' S.
abanžija *m.*, abanžijka *f.* 'cudzoziemiec, -ka' S, W.
ačik m'āstu 'miejsce otwarte, niezabudowane' W.
adā *f.*, adi *pl.* 'wyspa na morzu' S, W; *cf.* niši.
ad'axā! 'dobrze!, zgoda!' S.
ad'āsum 'żegnam się'; gu zarixa i ad'āsa 'pogrzebali go i po-
żegnali, rozstali się z nim' S; jas ad'āsa = ustāna bis rā-
buta 'straciłem pracę' S.
ādi 'dowidzenia' S; ādi māli! tāti! 'pa! pa! mamusiu i tatusiu!'.
ādika *adv.* 'niesłusznie, niesprawiedliwie'; ādika gu gōniš S, ādika
gu spždaš W 'niesłusznie go wypędzasz (*sc.* z domu).
ādja *f.* 'pozwolenie' S, W; bis n'ēguva ādja 'bez jego pozwolenia' W
āžba? 'czy, czyż?' S.
ažilē *n.* 'gwałtowna potrzeba, konieczność, sprawa niecierpiąca
zwłoki' S.

An expert in Polish and Slavic Studies and one of the founding fathers of Balkan Studies, dialect researcher Prof. Mieczysław Małecki (1903–1946) was an outstanding scholar who left behind a great legacy. He focused his research efforts on Croatian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Bulgarian and Macedonian dialects. The monograph *Dwie gwary macedońskie* (*Suche i Wysoka w Soluńskim*), containing a record of texts in the two dialects – stories of the residents of two villages located in the Thessaloniki district of Aegean Macedonia (today – northern Greece), is a particularly important and valuable work.

This is what Prof. Małecki had to say about his interaction with one of the residents of the village of Suche, 42-year-old Apostol Papučiju: "[...] we may learn how many stories this storyteller has for us in store, since I managed to exhaust his trove. He might have boasted that I would never be able to write down all his fairy tales, because he could tell them all year long, but by the end of my two-month stay he had to admit his defeat, saying that he had no more stories to tell". The results of Prof. Małecki's research constitute an invaluable contribution to Macedonian culture. At a time when neighbouring countries were questioning the distinctness of the Macedonian language, the Polish scientist unequivocally asserted that the dialects he was studying could not be considered to be either Serbian or Bulgarian.

Prof. Mieczysław Małecki suffered a tragic fate. On 6 November 1939, after the outbreak of World War II, he was arrested by the Germans, together with a group of more than 180 Polish scholars. He was imprisoned in German concentration camps in Sachsenhausen and Dachau. After his release, he returned to Krakow, where he organised secret classes for students. He died prematurely just after the war, at the age of 43.

Belgrade is not so far from Warsaw anymore...



Visit of Yugoslavian deputies to Poland. Wilson Park, Poznań, June 1933. The Mayor of Poznań, Cyryl Ratajski, can be seen in the centre, with a black hat in his hand.

Source: National Digital Archives

In the 1930s, there were many visits of representatives of Yugoslavia to Poland. In June 1933, Yugoslav deputies were received by the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki, and in September of the same year, members of the Polish parliament went to Belgrade. In the following years, Poznań hosted, among others, the Deputy Speaker of the Skupština, Kosta Popović and the Minister of Communication of Yugoslavia, Mehmed Spaho. State relations between the two countries were very lively.

“Belgrade is not so far from Warsaw anymore, like it was before the war”, wrote deputy Branko Lazarević in Greater Poland’s *Tęcza* magazine. “Yugoslavian scholars, artists, writers, politicians, traders, industrialists come to Poland all the time, and the other way around. These congresses and conventions serve as a platform for the exchange of thought and products, making plans and exploiting combinations. There is a kind of symbiosis of cultural values, where paths for cooperation are made and an exchange of goods takes place. [...] There is not a single area in which cooperation cannot be extended in order to get to know each other and get closer to each other. All the interests of Poland and Yugoslavia, from political to economic, demand cooperation.”



Visit of the Minister of Communications of Yugoslavia, Mehmed Spaho, to Poland. Imperial Railway Station in Poznań, May 1937.

Source: National Digital Archives

On stage and on screen



Opening of an exhibition of Yugoslavian folk art in Warsaw. The photo shows, among others, the Polish First Lady, Maria Mościcka (with flowers) and the Deputy Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, Bronisław Żongolowicz (in a cassock), December 1934.

Source: National Digital Archives

Group of Polish writers and columnists at the Belgrade Railway Station, including: Zofia Nałkowska, Press Attaché of the Polish Embassy, Ksawery Glinka, J. Kiwnarska, H. Siemińska, K. Musiałówna, Wanda Melcer-Sztekerowa and Henryk Malhomme.

Source: National Digital Archives



Obilić choir from Yugoslavia during its visit to Poland, 1925.

Source: National Digital Archives



Juliusz Osterwa (sitting second from the right) during his visit to Yugoslavia, 1933.

Source: National Digital Archives



Pola Negri as Draga, Queen of Serbia, in one of the scenes of *A Woman Commands*, 1932.

Source: National Digital Archives

The interwar period was a time of lively cultural exchange between Poles and the Balkan nations. For one season, a Poznań tenor named Drabik was engaged by Belgrade Opera. His performances were critically acclaimed in the local press. As the *Pravda* daily of 8 May 1931 wrote, Drabik would quickly become famous “thanks to the power of his voice, which he showed in his guest appearances on the Belgrade Opera stage, especially in *Tosca*”. That review was quoted in *Dziennik Poznański*. Many other artists travelled to Yugoslavia, including actor and director Juliusz Osterwa, writer and traveller Ferdynand Antoni Ossendowski, as well as members of the “Echo” academic choir from Krakow. The writer Zofia Nałkowska, whose drama *Dom kobiet* [Women’s House] was translated into Serbian-Croatian, was also warmly welcomed in the country.

Poland, in turn, hosted various bands and ensembles from Yugoslavia, including the Obilić, and in 1934, an exhibition of Yugoslavian folk art was opened in Warsaw.

There is also an interesting anecdote connected with Pola Negri, a renowned Polish actress who had gained the status of an international star of silent cinema. Pola Negri played Draga, Queen of Serbia, in the American film *A Woman Commands*, thus contributing to the presence of this historical figure in pop culture.

Medals and distinctions



Persons decorated with medals awarded by the King of Yugoslavia. From the right: Consul of Yugoslavia in Poznań, Marcel Scheffs, Mayor of Poznań, Cyryl Ratajski, Vice-President of the Polish-Yugoslavian Society, Bohdan Jarochoowski, Secretary of the Polish-Yugoslavian Society, Józef Woźniak and President of the Polish-Yugoslavian Association, Tadeusz Powidzki. Poznań, December 1933.

Source: National Digital Archives

In the 1930s, several Poles received Yugoslavian state accolades and distinctions. In April 1937, the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki, was bestowed the highest distinction – the Great Ribbon of the Order of Karadorde's Star. In 1932, several professors of the University of Poznań received the Order of St Sava, presented by the Honorary Consul of Yugoslavia in Poznań. A year later, the same award was presented to the Mayor of the city of Poznań, Cyryl Ratajski. The heads of local organisations, including Józef Woźniak, Secretary of the Polish-Yugoslavian Society, and Tadeusz Powidzki, President of the Polish-Yugoslavian Association, received the Order of the Yugoslav Crown.

Yugoslavian diplomats, headed by the extremely popular Branko Lazarević, received the Great Ribbon of the Order of Polonia Restituta, a distinction presented for developing good relations with other countries.



Decoration of the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki with the highest Yugoslavian distinction, the Great Ribbon of the Order of Karadorde's Star, April 1937.

Source: National Digital Archives



Presentation of the Order of St Sava to several professors of the University of Poznań, by the Honorary Consul of Yugoslavia in Poznań, Marcel Scheffs, May 1932.

Source: National Digital Archives

Trade



Food trade
on the streets
of Sarajevo,
the turn
of the 1920s
and 1930s.

Source: National
Digital Archives

Opening of the Polish-Yugoslavian Chamber
of Commerce in Łódź, 1933.

Source: National Digital Archives



“[Poland] as an agricultural country with highly developed industrial districts, may find a very capacious market for its industrial products in the Balkan countries [...] On the other hand, a whole range of products that Poland has to import anyway out of sheer necessity, could be imported from Yugoslavia to a much greater extent than before,” claimed the author of a leaflet promoting Polish-Yugoslavian cooperation.

Metal products – rails, railway stock and components, agricultural machinery, as well as bridge structural items – were the staple of Polish export to the Balkans. Other than that, the country also exported coal, kerosene, seeds and textiles. Polish imports included dried Serbian and Bosnian plums, slivovitz, wine, fish and canned fish, tobacco, leather, medicinal plants and ores.

In the 1930s, several Polish textile companies were established in Yugoslavia. Interestingly enough, one of the earliest Polish-owned businesses in the Balkans was the first modern steam brewery in Serbia. It was founded by Polish emigrants, Ignacy and Jerzy Weifert, who arrived in the Balkans in 1873. “The growth of the brewery industry in Serbia is owed to their initiative, their great experience and inexhaustible energy,” declares an advertisement published in 1928.

Fragment of the advertisement in the “Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes 1918-1928” leaflet, Warsaw, 1928.

Source: National Library of Poland



Musical instruments on sale in Sarajevo, 1933.

Source: National Digital Archives



Slavic bazaar
in Belgrade –
Polish stand,
1938.

Source:
National
Digital
Archives

Pierwszy Serbski Browar Parowy, Jerzy Weifert, S. A.
Białogród
(Prva Srpska parna pivara Gjorgja Wajfert D. D.)

Zarząd:	Dyrektor techniczny:	Rada nadzorcza:
Prezes: P. Jerzy Weifert.	P. Filip Buchner.	Prezes: P. K. Protyć.
Członkowie, pp.: dr. F. Gramberg.	Dyrektor handlowy:	Członkowie, pp.: O. Weifert,
dr. J. Jeliković, D. D. Protić, plk. L. Lechianin.	P. J. Nesić.	J. Weifert.

Boza: Staggering career of a Balkan drink in Białystok



Postcard of Hotel Ritz in Białystok. The ground floor housed Najdo Stojanović's buzna – note the white arched shop windows visible on the left side of the postcard.

Source:
[National Library of Poland](#)

Pejkov, Stojanović, Boškov: these names are still associated by residents of Białystok with their favourite pre-war delicacies. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a group of Macedonians settled in Białystok, and several of them established confectioneries (buznas) in the city. These served delicious halva and boza – a refreshing drink made of barley or millet groats, yeast, sugar and water.

The beverage gained so much popularity that the ability to make it had become very desirable. One day an advertisement appeared in the local paper: "I will teach you to make boza" (and the price of said training was supposedly not too high). Soon, Polish and Jewish confectioners also started to make boza.

"Among middle school students there was even a fashion for halva and boza. How many of the first interwar love confessions of enamoured teenagers were sprinkled with boza and sealed with the sweetness of halva?" wrote Andrzej Lechowski, director of the Podlachia Museum, in *Kurier Poranny*. In 1927, Balkan, Tanče Boškov's buzna in Białystok, received the Grand Prix award at the Exposition du bien-être in Paris. Recently, boza has been experiencing a renaissance in Białystok, and come to be enjoyed once more by newer generations of residents. In 2018, the beverage was entered into the List of Traditional Products that is maintained by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Halva with a glass of boza

Source:
www.zielonykoperek.pl

Family photo



“Polish and Yugoslavian psychologists point to a very close kinship”, stressed Branko Lazarević in an article in *Tęcza* magazine. “Despite the geographical distance, these two nations are subject to similar fundamental impulses, and, in addition, have many characteristics that point to a common origin. The similarity of certain basic features of character is striking: pride, individualism, military spirit, poorly developed practicality, similar historical ideology, strong will, temperament, endurance.”

Polish-Balkan partnerships were established by a multitude of professional groups: lawyers, doctors, journalists, scientists, economists and entrepreneurs. Members of the organisation met every month for lectures combined with dance parties. They also published their own magazine *Przegląd Polsko-Jugosłowiański* [Polish-Yugoslavian Review].

Dance party of the Polish-Yugoslavian Society
in Adria, Poznań, February 1932.

Source: National Digital Archives



THE BERLIN PROCESS

Poznań – a city with a rich and diverse history of Polish-Balkan relations is proud to host the 2019 Western Balkans Summit. Celebrating the 15th anniversary of its accession to the European Union in 2019, Poland joined the Berlin Process to share its experiences from the period of European integration. The organisers of the event draw on the achievements of previous summits in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Trieste and London. The summit in Poznań was preceded by much preparation, and many conferences and debates that were dominated by key issues, including economy, connectivity, civic dimension and security.

Meeting
of Szymon
Szynkowski vel Sęk,
the Deputy Minister
of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Poland,
with the ambassadors
of the Western Balkan
countries
for consultation
concerning
the 2019 Western
Balkans Summit
in Poznań.

Source: Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Poland

2014: Invitation for cooperation

The Berlin Process is an initiative supporting regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. It complements the EU enlargement policy. The process was initiated by Germany, where the first summit was held in 2014.

The Berlin Process involves six Western Balkan partners who are candidates (Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania) and potential candidates (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo) for becoming EU Member States, and who are covered by the EU enlargement policy. Several EU Member States are involved in the process: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.

The work taking place as part of the Berlin Process also involves the European Commission, international financial institutions, as well as international and regional organisations.



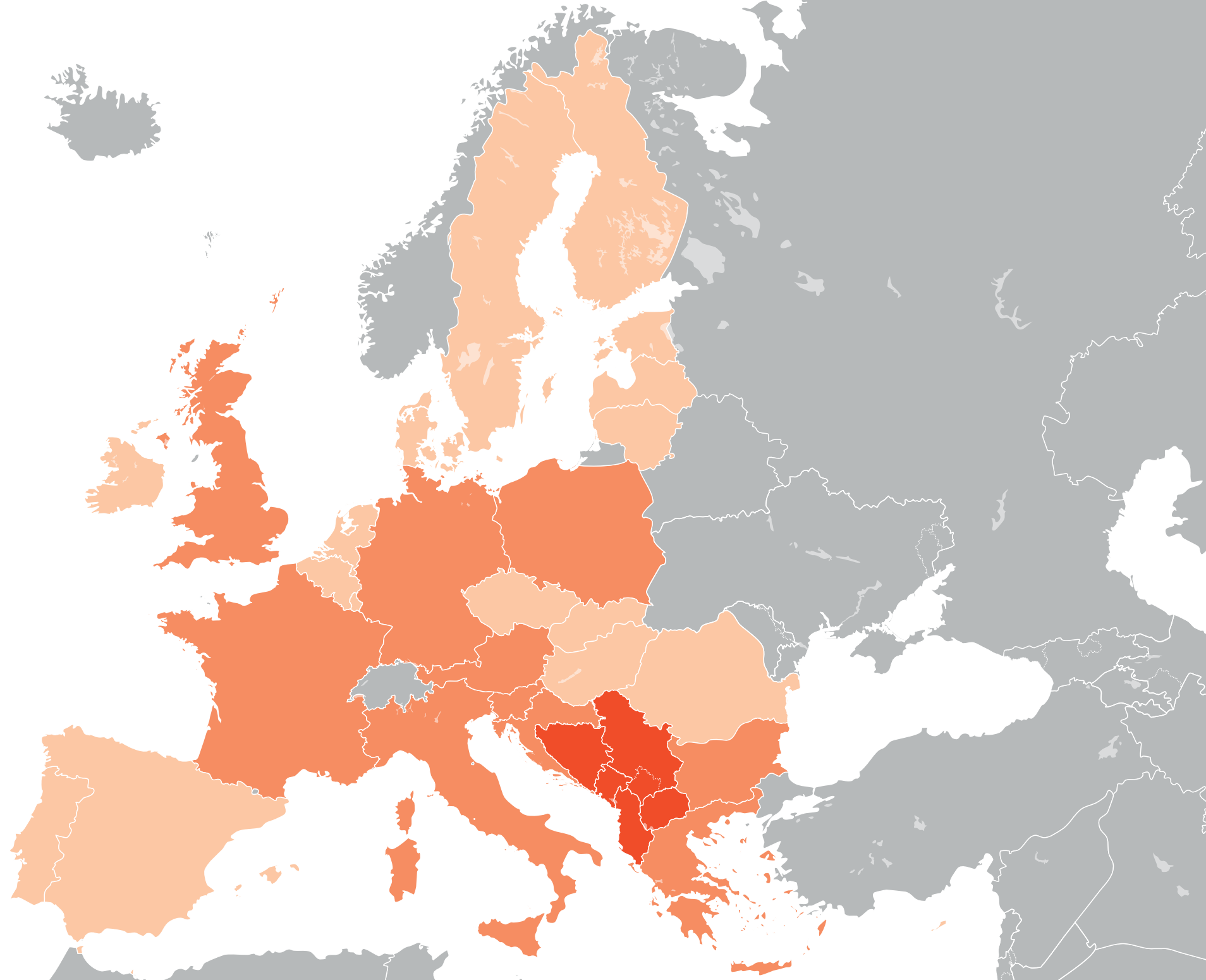
**Non-EU states
participating
in the Berlin
Process**



**EU states
participating
in the Berlin
Process**



**Rest
of the EU states**



Western Balkans Summits 2014-2019: From Berlin to Poznań



Western Balkans Summit in Vienna, 27 August 2015. Source: European External Action, flickr.com

Following the first summit in Berlin (2014), subsequent summits were held in 2015 in Vienna, 2016 in Paris, 2017 in Trieste and 2018 in London. Since 2015, there has also been the Civil Society Forum and the Business Forum along with the Youth Forum (as of 2016). The 2019 Summit is taking place in the capital of Greater Poland – Poznań.

Economics lies at the heart of the Berlin Process. The aims of the cooperation are, among others, carrying out the infrastructure projects featured in the so-called Connectivity Agenda. These include primarily energy and transport projects, such as rebuilding ports, renovating railway lines or constructing gas interconnectors. At the Trieste Summit, the Prime Ministers of the Western Balkan countries adopted the Multi-Annual Action Plan for the Regional Economic Area. This aims at gradually increasing the free movement of goods, services, investments and workers in the region.

NGOs, including youth organisations, are also involved in the Berlin Process. One of the greatest achievements of the Berlin Process is the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office. This was established at the 2016 Paris Summit. The aim of this project is to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programs.



Western Balkans Summit in Paris, 4 July 2016.

Source: France Diplomatie, diplomatie.gouv.fr



Western Balkans Summit in Trieste, 12 July 2017.

Source: Italian Embassy in Belgrade, flickr.com



Western Balkans Summit in London, 10 July 2018.

Source: Krystian Maj / Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland, flickr.com

2018: Poland joins the Berlin Process



Western Balkans Summit in London, 10 July 2018. From the left: Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Theresa May, and Prime Minister of Poland Mateusz Morawiecki.

Source: Krystian Maj / Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland



At the invitation of Chancellor Angela Merkel, Poland joined the Berlin Process in 2018. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki attended the Western Balkans Summit in London. During the meeting in London, the participants discussed issues of effective connection of the Western Balkans with the European Union. "Our intention is to share our various experiences from the accession process, the process of joining the European Union, with our friends from the Western Balkans", said Mateusz Morawiecki.

Jacek Czaputowicz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, assured that Poland is ready to help the Western Balkans in carrying out the required reforms. "Poland fully supports the European aspirations of our partners from the Western Balkans. We are ready to share our pre-accession know-how and best practices," the minister emphasised.

Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz at the Western Balkans Summit in London.

Source: Gabriel Piętko / Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

2019: Polish Presidency of the Berlin Process



The Berlin Process foreign ministers' meeting in Warsaw, 12 April 2019.

Source: Gabriel Piętko / Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

On 1 January 2019, Poland took over the presidency of the Berlin Process. The Presidency Programme, adopted by the Council of Ministers, is based on four pillars: economy, connectivity, civic dimension (encompassing civil society, youth, think tanks, science and culture), as well as security.

In July 2018, the city hosting the 2019 Western Balkans Summit (3–5 July 2019) was announced by Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. „The 2019 Western Balkans Summit will take place in Poznań, in a city with almost 100 years of trade fair tradition, and a vibrant academic centre. We are going to host the political leaders of Europe and their ministers. The capital of Greater Poland will provide a platform for conducting important talks and making decisions crucial for all of Europe. The city of beautiful economic traditions will host entrepreneurs from all over Europe, who will meet to exchange experiences and debate about intensifying cooperation,” said Szymon Szykowski vel Sęk, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

The Summit takes place at the Poznań International Fair. The meetings with the ministers of economy, internal affairs, and foreign affairs are followed by those with the leaders and heads of governments and states. The list of accompanying events features the Think Tank Forum, EU-Western Balkans Business Forum and Civil Society Forum.



Meeting of Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz with his Croatian counterpart, Deputy Prime Minister Marija Pejčinović Burić, 17 April 2019.

Source: Tymon Markowski / Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

Road to Poznań



Think Tank Forum in Skopje, 13 May 2019. From the left: Adam Eberhardt, Director, Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), Szymon Szynkowski vel Sęk, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland, Plenipotentiary for the Western Balkans Summit, and Andrej Zhernovski, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Source: Macedonian Information Agency

Various preparations and numerous convocations preceded the organisation of the Poznań summit. The Think Tank Forum is a series of meetings of NGOs and think-tanks from the Western Balkans, Poland and other countries of the Berlin Process, as well as Visegrad partners and European institutions. It is an original initiative of the Polish Government Plenipotentiary for the Organisation of the Western Balkans Summit, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Szymon Szynkowski vel Sęk. The debates focus on key issues for the future of the Western Balkans. This innovative project expands on the priority of strengthening civil society.



Think Tank Forum in Skopje, 13 May 2019. Source: Macedonian Information Agency

“We have chosen civil society as one of the four priorities of our presidency of the Berlin Process. As part of this priority, we believe that strengthening the position of experts working in think-tanks is one of the most important aspects,” said Szymon Szynkowski vel Sęk during the expert meeting in Skopje. The aims of the debates include strengthening cooperation between Balkan and European think-tanks, as well as discussing achievements and challenges related to the EU enlargement policy and the development of the Berlin Process. The motto of the Think Tank Forum is *Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future*.

During the EU – Western Balkans Cultural Week, which took place in May, residents of Poznań had the opportunity to learn about the wealth of Balkan history, tradition and folklore. The event was organised by the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme of the event included a culinary show, concerts, lectures, the Balkan Film Fest, discussion panels, as well as public concourses with representatives of the culture world.

“We want to show that if we are to integrate with the Western Balkans, we must start the process from bottom-up – from the people. We must first understand each other, get to know each other better – only after this the integration and future enlargement of the European Union will be a success,” stressed Minister Szynkowski vel Sęk.



The EU – Western Balkans Cultural Week in Poznań.

Source: Patryk Borowiak / Adam Mickiewicz University, Institute of Slavonic Philology, the collection of Mirče Acev group

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Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future

In 2018, Poland joined the Berlin Process – an initiative supporting regional cooperation and the European aspirations of the Western Balkans that fulfils the role of a platform for dialogue and cooperation. Poland wants to share its experience of the period of political and economic transition with partners from the Western Balkans.

Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future takes the reader on a journey back in time to the era when Poland established their first contacts with the nations of the Balkans. Diplomacy, trade, science, culture, tourism, sport – after Poland regained independence in 1918, nearly all areas and aspects of life were ripe for cooperation. Poznań – a city boasting a history spanning many centuries, and which fought hard to return to the map of independent Poland – was often the centre of these relations before World War II. Today, the city returns to the roots by hosting the 2019 Western Balkans Summit.



Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Poland

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